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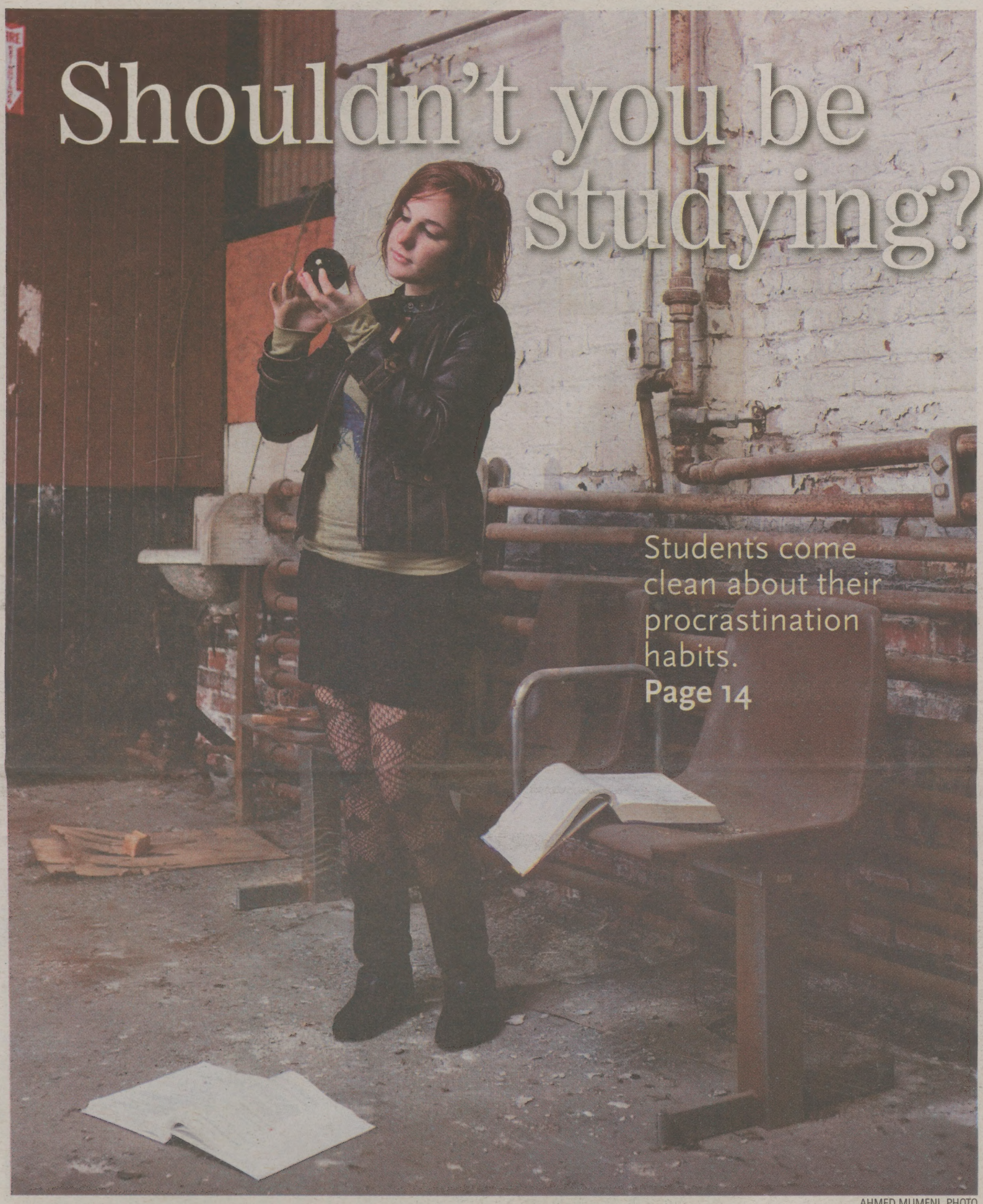

AHMED MUMENI PHOTO

Book prices soar

David Karp

The strong Canadian dollar should mean falling textbook prices, but instead prices are skyrocketing.

"There are more than enough examples of publishers that have raised their prices 35 per cent or more in the last year," said Jim Forbes, director of the UVic Bookstore. "Some of these examples are just horrendous. We've started to monitor price increases by publishers, and in September we saw some books go from $138 up to $175 on the floor."

Forbes said one French textbook, *Invitation* by Bonin, Birbichler, and Jarvis, which was distributed at $110.25 in August, is a good example of rising costs.

"It's coming up on a course in January, so we just called the publisher on Nov. 27. It's gone to $142.50 net. That's a 30 per cent increase in three months," said Forbes. "I sent an e-mail to the president of Nelson Canada on this one, just because I thought they need to know about it, and I'm getting a standard response."

The UVic Bookstore used to charge a 25 per cent markup on textbooks, but now they're selling at the U.S. list price, even if that hurts profits.

UVic economist David Scoones said the price increases are surprising."I can see no explanation for why the Canadian dollar would rise and the price of textbooks would be caused to go up by that," he said.

One explanation for the rising prices might be that Canadian textbook distributors are well insulated from competition. Regulations were added to the federal Copyright Act in 1999 that force Canadian bookstores to buy from a Canadian distributor, so long as the distributor is selling the book within 10 per cent of the American price. Even when a Canadian distributor is selling the book for a price 10 per cent higher than an American distributor, there are still bureaucratic hoops to jump through.

"We have to contact the publisher and tell them we're going to buy around them because their differential is more than 10 per cent, and it's been very much clouded by the exchange rate," said Forbes. "They could take you to court and sue you."

And that's assuming an American distributor is willing to sell to a Canadian bookstore.

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Digital media may wipe out textbooks

Many Canadian and American distributors have agreements with each other not to sell to bookstores in the other country.

"What we have is from the McGraw-Hill companies in the U.S. [is] the distribution rights for their products here in Canada," said Gordon Dyer, chief financial officer for McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd. That means McGraw's textbooks are often sold to American bookstores at a different price than what Canadian bookstores pay.

A 2005 report by the United States Government Accountability Office found that American distributors sign these agreements to prevent textbooks from being sold back into the United States at a lower price.

The report added that local price has much to do with teaching styles. In the United Kingdom, for example, profs often recommend a number of textbooks for students to choose from, resulting in more competition and lower prices.

Part of the problem with textbook pricing is that professors aren't aware what their students will pay when they select a textbook, said Scoones.

"You get sent all these books and you choose it on its pedagogical merits, and then you learn that the thing was $210," he said.

Forbes said the UVic Bookstore tries to call profs when they choose books with an unusually high price, but said it's not always possible to do given that the store handles 3,000 orders per semester.

"We look for any bombs that are coming down the pipe, and that is books with large variances between the Canadian distributor and American distributor, and we try to go back and communicate to the faculty member what this means for students at the end of the day," Forbes said.

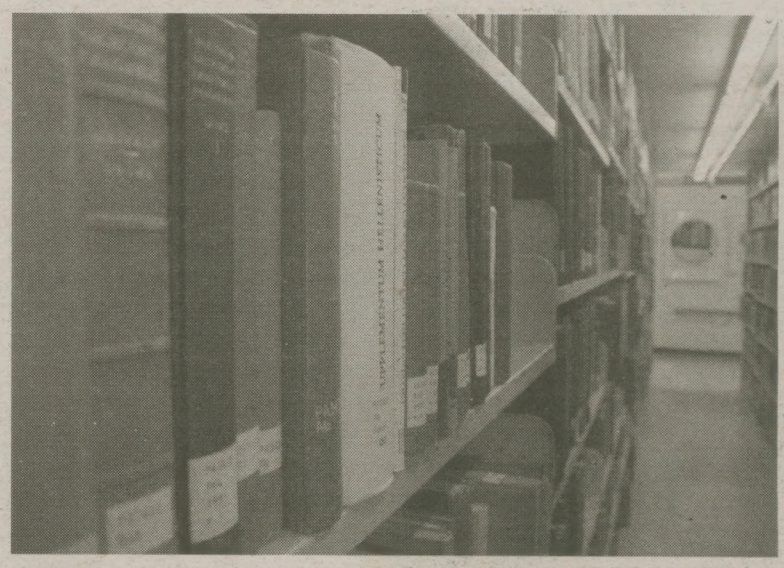
Another reason for rising textbook prices might be an indication that distributors are trying to get out of the textbook business, said Scoones.

"It's an exit strategy — just squeeze as much money as you can out of the people who are still willing to buy it and then realize that sales are going to go to zero in the next year or so," he said.

McGraw-Hill is moving the company's focus away from textbooks and more toward digital products, said Dyer, citing the textbook industry as "a flat to a modestly declining business this year and last."

He said McGraw-Hill has raised prices on some of its Canadian books and lowered prices on others.

"Sometimes there's very modest price increase to go along with the increases in paper prices that we end up paying," Dyer said.



AHMED MUMENI PHOTO

Textbooks like these may soon become a thing of the past.

Scoones said one of the reasons textbook prices in bookstores are rising might be that price-sensitive students have already found other solutions — online notes, course packs, used books, online or discount booksellers or photocopying a friend's book. He said it's possible that most of the people who still buy textbooks are willing to pay a very high price for them.

"Maybe publishers think, 'What the hell. If [the people who haven't chosen substitutes] pay $140, maybe they'll pay $180. Let's do it.' "

But Dyer has doubts. "I don't think you can say that people are willing to pay anything for books," said Dyer. "I think with the competitive publishing environment that there is in Canada, there is a wide variety of companies selling these products out there. If one company has got them priced way out of wack, you'll find professors opening their minds to other books that are out there."

A recent trend toward bundling may have also contributed to price increases. Publishers will sometimes only sell a book along with supplemental materials — software, study guides or access to online material, for example. Forbes said that makes it hard to sell used books because publishers won't sell the supplemental material separately.

So what are students doing about textbook pricing? Bobby Samuel, vice president of academics at the University of Alberta Students' Union, organized the first ever National Academic Round Table on Academic Materials from Nov. 21 to 23 in Toronto.

"We've been trying to get some type of dialogue going with the publishers, bookstores and students nationally for some time, and this just happened to be the year where all the elements came together," Samuel said. A dozen student unions sent representatives, including the UVic Students' Society.

"I think it was incredibly productive," said Samuel. "We got exactly what we wanted. We got a working group. We got people motivated. We got people excited about this issue."

CORRECTION

The Martlet erroneously reported Nov. 29 that Taylor Kitsch's character Tim Riggins on *Friday Night Lights* is a receiver. In fact, the character of Riggins is a linebacker and fullback.

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Invasive species threaten UVic

AHMED MUMENI PHOTO

Val Schaefer, director of restoration studies at UVic, said improper removal of ivy and other species can cause more harm than good.

Kimberly Bruce

Silent and deadly invaders creep through the woods of UVic's campus. Disturbed soil and past neglect have created perfect growing conditions for carpets of ivy and blackberry.

This invasion could have deadly consequences for local flora, but attempts to combat the spread are at a standstill on campus.

Exotic invasive species such as English ivy, Himalayan blackberry, Scotch broom and laurel don't have any natural predators, so they grow unchecked without human intervention, said Hillary Harrop-Archibald, a UVic geography alumnus.

Harrop-Archiblad has completed the first half of a natural features study commissioned by UVic Facilities Management, the second half of which is due in the spring. The document catologues the different species of plants and animals on campus and how they relate with ecosytems such as Mystic Vale, the forest surrounding UVic.

"In its peak growing season, English ivy can grow up to 22 centimetres in a month," she said.

This can eventually lead to an "ivy desert" where seedlings and native ground cover are essentially smothered, said Harrop-Archibald.

Val Schaefer, director of restoration studies in the environmental sciences department, said any restoration will be difficult because of the level of co-ordination needed to create an effective system. He said he would like to see more student collaboration with grounds staff to consistently maintain the invasive species on campus.

"One of the approaches that administration is looking at is to have students do it through course work. It's really an ideal opportunity for learning. It's at a scale where it could be handled by an undergraduate class."

Currently there aren't any student and grounds crew removal projects, said UVic sustainability co-ordinator Sarah Webb. In the last few years Facilities Management has organized several "work parties," where grounds crews educate students on proper removal techniques and then spend time cutting and hauling invasive species out of such areas as the Garry Oak Meadows.

"Invasive species removal and ecological restoration are very key components of campus sustainability," said Webb. "It is important to not only protect places but enhance them and ensure their long-term health."

But Webb said removing invasive species can be very costly, and it's hard to create an effective system. Dogs off-leash, mountain bikers and illegal dumping can compromise restoration efforts because heavy use degrades the vegetation in sensitive areas.

Schaefer said he has seen evidence of unauthorized ivy pulling in South Mystic Vale by students.

Schaefer cautioned that in the past this has led to conflict with grounds management because it violates CUPE 951 labour code. Students aren't allowed to initiate anything that could be union employee work.

Improper removal of invasives helps them to spread, said Schaefer. If fruiting broom or ivy are removed then the disturbed soil creates the ideal conditions for seed re-growth. Native plants must be put in directly afterwards to prevent this outcome.

"You also don't want to have erosion problems," said Schaefer. "That's one of the problems that we have here."

Schaefer said he's impressed with the university's commitment to sustainability and restoration, but added that he understands that Facilities Management has limited resources.

Any future course of action to stem the spread of invasive species will depend on the results of the natural features study, said Schaefer, adding that people need to be patient with the bureaucratic process.

"They're going to have a break from building now for a number of years, so they can take a look at things like stewardship."

Gamers raise cash for sick children

Steve Carey

A team of Canadian gamers raised more than $22,000 for charity by playing the worst video game ever for four-and-a-half days straight.

The Victoria-based Internet comedy troupe Loading Ready Run started the Desert Bus for Hope campaign with the goal of raising $5,000. Instead, they raised $22,805. The money was donated to Child's Play, a charity that gives to children's hospitals worldwide.

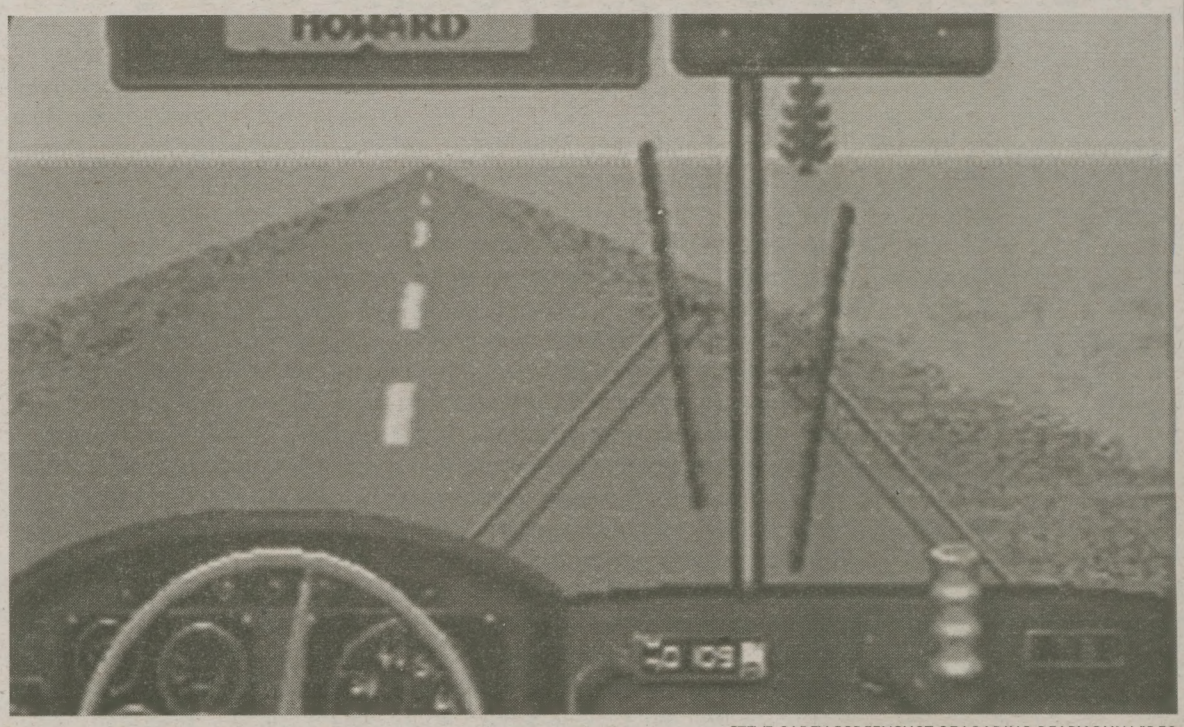
"Child's Play was set up to show that people who use the Internet and people who use video games can be generous, upstanding members of society," said Graham Stark, who founded Loading Ready Run with Paul Saunders. "And the proof is there, because they raised over a million dollars last year."

"The mixture of generosity and spite is a great thing— people were interested in a worthwhile cause, but also to put us through torment," said Stark, a fourth-year UVic visual arts student.

Desert Bus is part of an unreleased Sega CD game called Penn and Teller's Smoke and Mirrors.

Stark praised the support the team got from the game's creators — Penn and Teller donated $500 each, while Eddie Gorodetsky, one of the game designers, donated $500 if they crashed the bus.

"Teller ... was a huge moral support. He said, 'I want you guys to get enough donations that you're playing this game until you die.' "



STEVE CAREY SCREENSHOT OF LOADING READY RUN VIDEO

A Victoria comedy group drove an empty bus across a desert for more than four days for charity.

Players drive an empty bus with faulty steering at a maximum speed of 45 miles per hour from Tucson, Ariz. to Las Vegas, Nev., a real-time trip that takes the player eight hours. The game calls itself a "verisimulator" — a game stupefying like reality.

The desert stretches out before the bus, the game can't be paused, and the bus pulls to the right. If the bus crashes, it's towed back to Tucson in real time. If the bus makes it, the player has three seconds to decide to make the return trip — or the game restarts.

"Penn and Teller envisioned this game as a backlash against the whole 'video games will make you into a terrible violent person,' "said Stark.

From Nov. 23 to Nov. 28, the gamers ran a live webcast and received donations in order to keep playing another hour. They also received special donations for crashing the bus or playing upside down.

Bill Watt, Paul Saunders, James Turner and Morgan vanHumbeck each drove for 28 hours in four-hour shifts. Other members of Loading Ready Run, friends, and random strangers made up the pit crew.

"The support we got was incredible," said Stark. "People bringing us food, coming to hang out with us to make it less tedious, which was really important — I'm not going to lie, the game is painfully dull."

Loading Ready Run is now a platinum sponsor on the Child's Play website, which is one level higher than the Microsoft Game Studio.

"It's the only time in our lives we've ever been able to make Microsoft look cheap," said Stark.

Would driver and Loading Ready Run co-creator Paul Saunders ever play the game again?

"No. Certainly not for fun," said Saunders. "It is a bad, bad game."

BOARD BRIEFS

Virtue's leave extended

Erica Virtue's leave of absence was extended at the UVic Students' Society (UVSS) board of directors meeting on Dec. 3. Virtue is the director of services.

Director-at-large Christine Comrie has been filling in for Virtue since she went on sick leave in August. Comrie was given unanimous consent by the board to continue to serve in that position until Virtue returns to the job.

Virtue said in September that she couldn't work in the UVSS environment and that things would have to change in order for her to return to her duties. Virtue also said she had considered resigning.

The board also voted to require Virtue give two weeks notice before returning to work, and to compensate Comrie with two weeks of pay in the event Virtue returns. Virtue could not be reached for comment.

- Spencer Anderson

UVSS drops cash on coffee maker

The UVSS will spend $11,294.35 to replace the broken espresso machine at the Munchie Bar that contributes to lineups during peak periods. The current machine will be sold to defer costs.

The UVSS also approved $7,000 to buy out leases on three Zap copiers.

The Model UN Club got $5,000 for a trip to New York. The Undergraduate Politics Society got $3,000 for delegates to a conference in St. John's, N.L. The History in Art Students' Association got $1,000 for a trip to the Vancouver Art Gallery.

- Steve Carey

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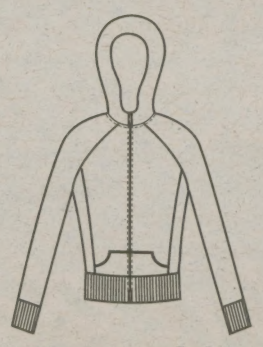
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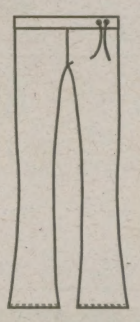
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Library toughens up on overdue books

Fines totalled $87,309 in 2006, libraries insist fees are meant to encourage students to return items

Steven Edwards

UVic libraries were almost 15 per cent less likely to forgive library fines last year, compared to 2001, according to recent documents obtained by the Martlet.

The libraries, which include the McPherson Library, the Diana M. Priestly Law library, the curriculum lab in the MacLauren building and various digital library systems, continue to forgive more fees than they collect.

Since 2001, the number of items borrowed annually has fallen by nearly 90,000 items to 480,982 items last year, while the value of fines enforced by the library has not declined.

Last school year, the library forgave 59 per cent of the fines it levied, collecting $87,309 in fines. In 2000-01, the library forgave 74 per cent of fines.

Shailoo Bedi, director of library access and branch services at UVic, attributed the more diligent fine collection to a more stable library computer system.

"Our transition from our old DOS-based system to our new library integrated system had a lot of problems in it," she said. "So we were forgiving a lot of fines that came about because there were so many system error problems."

Because of improvements in the computer systems, including a drop in bugs and the implementation of online notifications and renewals, Bedi explained, "there's probably less forgiveness."

Both Bedi and Vici Nielsen, administrator of access services with UVic libraries, were insistent that the primary purpose of fines is to encourage students to return books on time.

"It's never a punitive thing," said Nielsen. "Everybody needs that material. Because it's a shared resource, we found if you don't have some incentive to get the book returned, it doesn't return."

She said the library is forgiving when a student doesn't understand how the system works, what the options are for renewing books, or what the protocol for courtesy notices is.

"Once that's been explained to you, once we're sure you really understand what your options are and that you can manage library accounts, we're not going to be as forgiving," said Nielsen.

Bedi added the library is a lot less forgiving for overdue reserve materials and recalled books.

Student opinion on library fees is mixed. One third-year student told the Martlet that he believed the loan period allowed for "plenty of time" to return books, even after recently learning that he owed "a large amount" in fines. Others expressed their frustration that reserve books held past the loan period hurt their own access to the books they needed. One student, whose roommate had over $40 in fines outstanding, said that the fines were "annoying," and "aren't getting the books back."

"We don't see ourselves as making money off fines — that's never been our goal, but we do have a really strong sense of responsibility on how we can keep the items circulating," said Nielsen, who was insistent that she did not believe total fines collected had increased.

Money from library fines goes directly into library operations to buy and replace photocopiers, desktops and laptops. Library fines make up less than one per cent of the libraries' annual budget.

With more demand by professors to place books in the reserve section, both administrators affirmed that they were not likely to forgive these fees because of the immediate demand for the books.

"These are the books that really need to circulate quickly," said Nielsen. "If you have something that's a two-hour loan and somebody keeps it for two days, the implications for all the other students who need to get that reading done are huge."

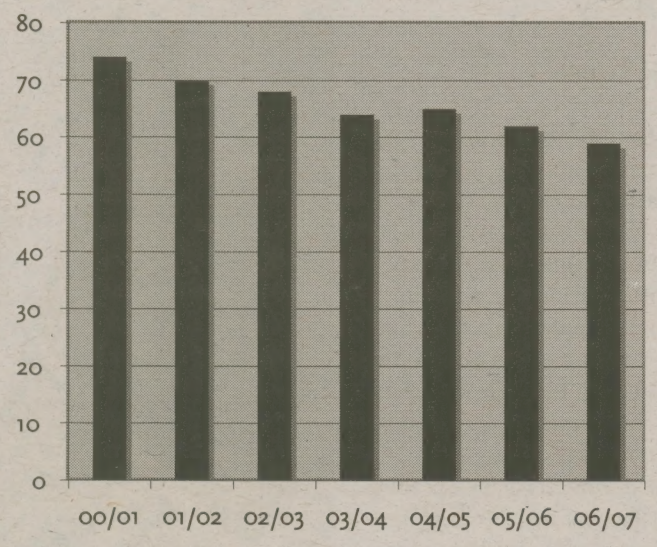
The library is not considering raising library fines in this area.

Library fines are set by the university senate. For undergrad students, the overdue rate is $1 per day for regular items, $2 per day on recalls, and $1.20 per hour for reserve items. Those haven't increased since the fines were established in 1994. UVic also enforces fines on faculty, something that many schools don't do.

"We're actually quite comparable with our counterpart libraries within the Canadian Association of Research Libraries — our fines are pretty equal. Some are higher, but we're probably about average," said Bedi.

To avoid library fines, the library recommends borrowers to regularly check their UVic e-mail and monitor their account through the library's website.

Percentage of fines levied that were forgiven by UVic libraries



ELLEN ROONEY GRAPHIC. SOURCE: UVIC LIBRARIES

This week in Martlet history

Stories from the Martlet archives

Dec. 8, 1994 — A Graduate Students' Society (GSS) meeting debated whether there was a conflict of interest concerning the GSS president, who worked in a co-op position at the Strategic Planning Task Force under UVic President David Strong. The president was also accused of not paying enough attention to the women's caucus.

Dec. 9, 1982 — An anonymous leaflet campaign accused a UVic economics professor of abusing his position. The professor allegedly used his office to interview female models for his sculptures.

Dec. 8, 1977 — UVic opened six all-night study halls in Clearihue. The rooms were open from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. The university also guarenteed that the vending machines adjacent to the rooms would be filled for late-night service.

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UVic second in party spirit

Molson campaign 'misinterpreted': brewery spokesperson

Lydia Adeli

UVic is the second-best party school, according to a contest put on by Molson.

In a recent Facebook contest called Molson Canadian Nation, universities were ranked according to the number of photos students uploaded from campus parties to the contest's Facebook page. Memorial University in Newfoundland came first with 67 photos. UVic came second with 26 photos.

Some students are taking this ranking with pride, but others say it's a false representation.

> "Dorm parties always get shutdown by RAs and there are too many restrictions."
>
> *– Melissa Bedford, first-year student*

"Dorm parties always get shutdown by RAs and there are too many restrictions," said Melissa Bedford, a first-year student living in residence.

First-year student Madeline Philips was skeptical of the contest's result.

"Perhaps UVic is a party school, but it doesn't seem that it should be ranked that highly," Philips said.

Another UVic student, Brigitte McMahon, said UVic has a reputation as a party school, with lots of off-campus students coming to parties on campus.

The UVic administration wasn't too pleased with the ranking. David Clode, UVic's executive director of student and ancillary services, said he wished Molson never held the contest.

"The contest promotes a negative image for students," Clode said, adding that no school would want to win this kind of contest.

When asked if UVic really is a party school, Clode said there is no foundation to compare to and that student drinking is a common among all universities. He stressed that UVic is putting a lot of effort in educating students about alcoholism. This is the first year that students and their parents received alcohol awareness brochures before arriving at UVic.

Molson spokesperson Cynthea Galbraith said the company is still tweaking its Facebook marketing strategy.

"The intent of the contest was maybe a bit misrepresented," Galbraith said. "The promotion was put together really as a strategic creative way to reach our [legal drinking age]-to-24 demographic. Social interaction and websites like Facebook are really key for reading that demographic right now."

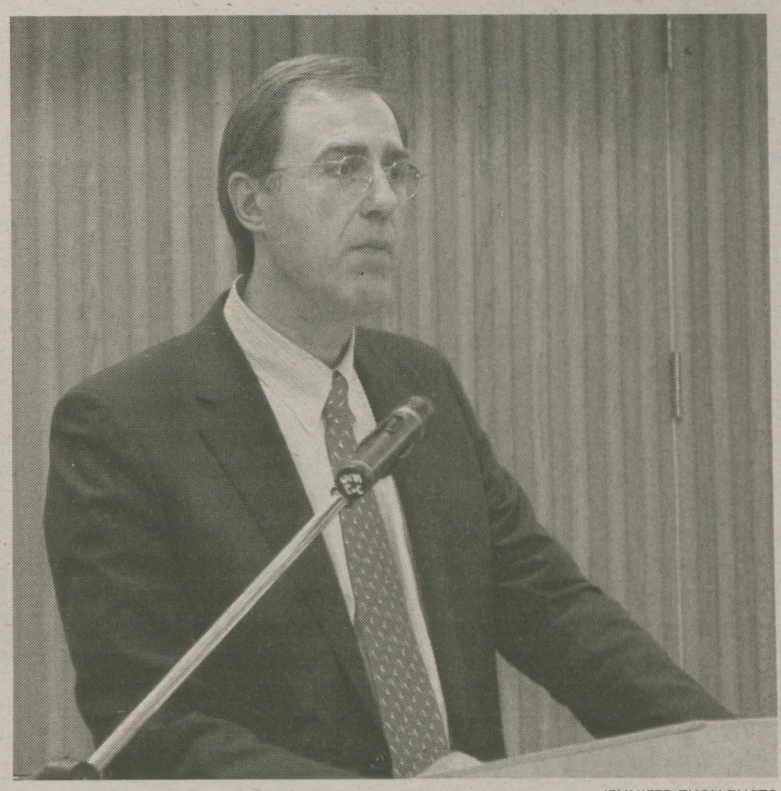
Molson has received criticism from university administrators and the Muse, Memorial University's student newspaper, for the contest, but Galbraith said the company intends to continue with Facebook marketing.

"It's an area of learning for us. A new social media channel comes with lots of challenges," she said. "We intend to be a leader in this area, and we're going to take the learning's, correct them, and we're going to come back with some new and relevant promotions in the future."

Lawyers remember Holocaust

Exhibit explores experience of Jewish lawyers in Nazi Germany

Melanie Tromp



JENNIFER ZHOU PHOTO

Eberhard Vetter, a member of the executive board of the German Lawyers Association, spoke about the fate of lawyers in Nazi Germany.

Politics has interfered with the right to justice many times — lawyers become the first target, the rule of law disappears and the legal system becomes an instrument for tyranny.

The internationally acclaimed Lawyers Without Rights travelling exhibit, running until Dec. 9 in the Student Union Building's Michèle Pujol Room, explores one of these jarring upheavals.

In 1938, during Germany's prelude to the Holocaust, roughly 9,600 Jewish lawyers were barred from practicing law. Most were eventually jailed and placed in concentration camps. Many were killed. Lawyers Without Rights profiles the lives of these lawyers.

A public round table on Nov. 29 discussed the historical and contemporary sites of prejudice and current challenges to the rule of law.

"It is a significant exhibit not only because of its historic meaning, but because of its contemporary significance as well," said Andrew Petter, dean of UVic's faculty of law. "We often do talk, at least in law school, about the importance of law, the rule of law, of lawyers. This exhibit puts a very human face on the price we pay if we don't adhere to principles such as the rule of law, where the role of lawyers is not respected and where discrimination is allowed to run rampant over matters of human rights."

The exhibit has dozens of two-metre-high posters detailing the lives and tribulations of individual German-Jewish lawyers before, during and after the Second World War. The Law Society of British Columbia provided three distinctive posters that outline the lives of three Jewish lawyers who restarted their lives in B.C. after the Holocaust.

Maureen Maloney, a former dean of UVic Law and current Lam Chair in Law and Public Policy, said that similar human rights atrocities remain prevalent around the globe.

"Every day things are happening that are eroding slowly not only international human rights but are also eroding the rule of law worldwide, including Canada. We have to be very, very careful about how we react to these situations," said Maloney. She outlined modern examples of targeted lawyers in South Africa, Thailand, Guatemala, China, Cambodia, Iraq and the U.S.'s Guantanamo Bay.

"But what about the United States of America?" asked Maloney. "It's not just that they've undermined their own sense of rule of law, they've undermined the sense of law of the international community."

Maloney said about 3,000 lawyers have been imprisoned in Pakistan.

"What, then, should we be doing about this?" Maloney asked. "What can be done at an international level, a national level, and what can individuals and organizations do?"

Leo Adler, a Toronto-based lawyer of Jewish descent who lost family in the Holocaust also spoke, as well as Eberhard Vetter, an executive of the German Lawyers' Association. Vetter provided insight into his country's post-war reflections and policies on the legal system.

The exhibit's founder, Tel Aviv-based lawyer Joel Levi, rounded out the panel with his take on the atrocities of the Holocaust and the positive improvement its lessons have brought to the state of Israel.

"There is a positive side to this dreadful story," said Levi. "The Germans came to Israel after the war to build up its notion of the rule of law, including a very strong Supreme Court."

The Lawyers Without Rights project originated in Germany and has showcased in Israel, Mexico City, New York, Los Angeles, Toronto, Ottawa and Vancouver.

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NATIONAL NEWS

Canadian Blood Services called 'homophobic'

Jaela Bernstien
UWO GAZETTE

LONDON, Ont. (CUP) — The King's University College students' union could ban Canadian Blood Services from their campus because of its "homophobic" policy.

Ryan Gauss, president of the King's University College Students' Council, motioned to ban Canadian Blood Services from the campus in response to a policy against receiving donations from men who have had sex with men. King's University College is affiliated with the University of Western Ontario.

The motion was deferred to the student council's January meeting. In the meantime, the union will lobby for a change in the policy and initiate broader discussions on campus.

Gauss decided to move forward with the issue after a presentation the previous week from Standing Against Queer Discrimination, a campus student group.

"Without question, there is support there [to remove Canadian Blood Services from campus]," Gauss said. He said a ban could push Canadian Blood Services to change its policy and encourage discussion throughout the University of Western Ontario's main campus and affiliate colleges.

"We can write and try to lobby Canadian Blood Services until the cows come home," Gauss said. "We're trying to put some pressure from a student organization."

Gauss noted the motion, if passed, would not harm the blood supply since students could still donate blood off campus. "We do not believe it is going to adversely impact the blood donations from our students at all," he said.

Joshua Ferguson, co-activist director of Students Against Queer Discrimination, was pleased with the motion.

"I think any sort of support that we receive at this point will have influence over main campus and over anyone's feelings of the issue," Ferguson said.

The University of Western Ontario's main student union agreed that there are issues with the policy, but decided to lobby at the federal and provincial levels rather than ban Canadian Blood Services.

"We're supporting the research agenda," said Tom Stevenson, president of the that union. "Banning Canadian Blood Services on campus would do more harm than good."

Cindy Graham, media spokesperson for Canadian Blood Services in Southern Ontario, said that banning donor clinics from the campus would be a move in the wrong direction.

"We would hope that they would work with us on any of their concerns that we could address," she said.

The students in London, Ont. are not the first to express disappointment with the policy. Earlier this year, a Bad Blood Campaign was established at Concordia University, demanding that Héma-Québec and Canadian Blood Services review their policies against accepting donations from men who have had sex with men.

JONAS HREBENIUK / THE GAZETTE (CUP) PHOTO

Students Against Queer Discrimination, a group at King's University College, stage a mock graveyard for people who have died because of homophobia.

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Opinions

EDITORIAL

Plenty to improve upon

The term is coming to an end, and students are receiving evaluations left, right and centre. In the spirit of the season, the Martlet thought it'd be a good idea to give the UVic Students' Society (UVSS) board of directors an end-of-semester evaluation of their own.

UVSS boards are notorious for blunders, and this year's board has had a few of their own. One such blunder was voting to ban the military from the January Career Fair. The board ignored a reasonable request by Career Services to consult the military before making a decision in September. Instead, the board invited Students Against War to speak at the meeting when the decision was made. That's perfectly fine, except that no such invitation was extended to the military.

However, the board learned well from their mistake. Members realized the need to listen to the students they represent, and reversed their decision to allow students to have a direct say in the issue at the society's annual general meeting. Board members made articulate, passionate arguments for and against each side leading up to the annual general meeting, and respected each other despite differing viewpoints.

Unfortunately, respect for each other is something the board hasn't always had. Director of services Erica Virtue has been on a leave of absence since September, citing a difficult working environment as contributing to her leave. One can point fingers as to who is to blame for Virtue's leave, but when a board member doesn't show up for work for months, there's a problem. Board members owe it to Virtue to work with her to find a fix for the problem so she can come back and start fresh in the New Year. Virtue owes it to students to resign if there is no fix.

One important function of the board is hosting events which bring students together. This got off to a bad start with two liquor license violations against the society. It's hard to blame this year's board for those, given that the incidents occurred before the board took office. Still, Cornival, the highlight of which was free corn and a bouncy bungie thingamabob, lacked the buzz of the usual beer garden. And there are no plans for a SUB Party. That being said, the board pulled off a sold-out UVic Idol show in Vertigo on Nov. 30, even managing to serve alcohol without any major mishaps. Perhaps they're learning from past mistakes.

This year's board also seems open to electoral change, even if they're a little slow to react. The board missed a Nov. 24 deadline to hire an expert to implement electoral reforms — not too impressive. But they came through on Dec. 3, approving $5,000 to hire expert Christopher Lloyd to fix the voting system (they've also hired Ben Johnson, the chief electoral officer during the infamous Penny Beames – Mike Waters election, as their new Resource Centre co-ordinator).

Board members from across the spectrum have also started to challenge the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), something that hasn't been seen in recent years. Board members are involved with a petition to hold a referendum over whether or not to defederate, and the society is putting forward motions to the next BC-CFS meeting to try and address concerns about the federation's transparency and accountability. That's something new.

One past practice the board has abandoned is pushing for lower tuition fees. The UVSS has opted out of the CFS campaign to reduce student fees, which begs the question that if the board can't get behind lower tuition fees, what can they get behind? Instead, they're campaigning for better transit service and pushing for more sustainability on campus.

Whether you like what they've done or not, it's what we voted for.

Editorial topics are decided on by staff at our weekly editorial meeting at 3:30 p.m. every Friday in the Martlet office (SUB B011). Editorials are written by one or more staff members and are not necessarily the opinion of all staff members.

JENNIFER ZHOU GRAPHIC

LETTERS

In your face, racism

Thank you, Michael Brown. Your letter regarding the Racism In Your Face poster campaign (Letters to the editor, Nov. 29) elucidates precisely why ongoing mobilization around racism is meaningful and necessary. The idea that racism is obsolete, and that its only contemporary incarnations are the explicitly racist actions of "uneducated, hateful bigots" is a popular fallacy. It has a particularly powerful currency among "intelligent and open-minded Canadians." I assume that when Brown uses the term Canadian, he means white Canadians, because we white Canadians like to think of ourselves as good people who tolerate diversity.

The idea that we could be racist is distressing to us (as Brown's aggressively defensive letter demonstrates) because it contradicts our delusional sense of identity. But it's awfully difficult to conceal the fact that the white Canadian identity, Canadian society, and the nation itself are founded on racist values, and that racism continues to uphold our institutions. Racism is systemic, not simply individual, and it permeates all aspects of our lives. The Racism In Your Face campaign is a step in the right direction.

- Lauren Warbeck, UVic student

Campaign strikes a nerve

A note to Michael Brown, and all others who have misunderstood the Racism in Your Face poster campaign (Letters to the editor, Nov. 29) and to those who "fucking get it" already.

If Brown gets it already, why does he find it so disturbing so as to write a letter to the Martlet expressing his distaste in the campaign? Because deep down he knows racism isn't dead. Racism is not dead when those anti-racist posters are being ripped down, vandalized and ruined with graffiti. It is very much alive. People think it's dead because my guess is it doesn't directly affect them. The majority of this campus is made up of intelligent and nice people who reside in a racist society. UVic has seen professors and students targeted with acts of racist verbal abuses in the form of graffiti in classrooms. This poster campaign forces certain people to acknowledge that their privilege in this society puts them in a position where they don't have to question or worry of the implications of their race and background. It must be a rude awakening when the distinction between bigots and the intelligent, open-minded people becomes blurred.

- Ashly Kissman, UVic student

Spirit of motion not violated

After reading last week's Martlet story on how the UVSS board has failed to meet the 30-day deadline for hiring an independent expert to implement recommended changes to the electoral policy, I couldn't help but feel I was reading a smear piece which unfortunately was filed under "news" instead of "opinions" (UVSS violates motion, Nov. 29). David Karp failed to interview any of the members of the hiring committee. Had he done so, he would have been able to report that the committee was struck as soon as possible, had followed standard procedures and would have a candidate to recommend at the Dec.. 3 board meeting. The only reason the board failed to meet the 30-day deadline was due to the scheduling of board meetings falling outside the deadline. While the letter of the motion was "violated," the spirit of the motion — ensuring the hiring took place in good time — was upheld.

If Karp was unable to contact any of the committee members before the Martlet's press deadline, I would advise him in the future to wait until he has all the facts instead of running an incomplete story.

- Edward Pullman, UVSS director-at-large

Biology students suffer

I appreciated Samantha Magnus bringing to light the state of ecology courses in the biology department (Botching biology, Nov. 29). I chose to come to UVic from Ontario specifically to study marine biology and ecology under the delusion that being surrounded by the ocean might actually facilitate studying it. I have be disappointed time and time again with the lack of courses and the poor scheduling that occurs.

I had been planning on taking Population Ecology for two years now and was frustrated to see it canceled. I was advised that taking Conservation Biology covered many of the same topics, but since it was scheduled for the same time as Evolution I had to pick one.

With so few ecology and whole-organism classes, surely it would be possible to run them at the same time? At the end of my four years, I'm now wishing I'd gone to Simon Fraser and if asked, that's where I would, and have, directed other ecology students to go.

The only thing that has saved my degree is Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre, an expensive option but the only way to take decent fourth-year courses.

- Laura McLeod, UVic student

Happy? Sad? Enraged? Engaged?
Tell us: letters@martlet.ca
The Martlet has an open letters policy and will endeavour to print every letter received from the university community. Letters must be submitted by e-mail, include your real name and affiliation to UVic, and have "Letter to the editor" in the subject line. Letters must be under 200 words and may be edited.

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Alain Champagne, Steven Edwards, Samantha Garofalo, Matthew Gauk, Alex Grant, Matthew Kemshaw, Bryan Linge, Nathan Lowther, Kim Magi, Samantha Magnus, Josh Thompson

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Martlet (SUB B 011)
P.O. Box 3035
University of Victoria
Victoria, B.C. V8W 3P3

Newsroom/Production: 721-8360
Editor: 853-3206
Business: 721-8361
Advertising: 721-8359
Fax: 472-4556
www.martlet.ca

Deal threatens sovereignty

Roshan Virk

The Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP) trade agreement between the United States, Canada and Mexico will affect every federal ministry and over 300 areas of regulation, yet the agreement is completely undemocratic. It hasn't been debated in any of the legislatures of the three countries involved and Canadian civil society organizations are excluded from the trade talks.

The SPP was launched behind closed doors in 2005 to further integrate the countries involved. Regulation around areas such as security, energy and water will be affected by the agreement.

One of the key players in the SPP agreement, the U.S. Center for Strategic and International Studies, released a document stating that Canada and Mexico should work with the United States to take "concrete steps to create a North American security perimeter and further harmonization of immigrant and refugee policies."

"No-fly" lists which have already been implemented in Canada are one alarming example of this harmonization. "The list is rife with potential for abuse — blacklisting innocent people, racial profiling, invasion of privacy, use of false information and faulty criteria for judging high-risk travellers — to name a few," Bruce Campbell of the Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives wrote in an editorial. Campbell also said that Canada's list will almost certainly merge with the United States "no-fly" list, which will result in further compromising civil liberties.

SPP member states are discussing "joint optimum utilization of the available water." The problem is that under NAFTA, water is treated as a "good" whereby "no party may adopt or maintain any prohibition or restriction on the exportation or sale for export of any good destined for the territory of another party". This means once Canada starts exporting fresh water to the United States, we can't turn off the tap.

Canada's ability to regulate will be threatened under the SPP. Take food safety, for example. The SPP's business council (the North American Competitiveness Council) called for the harmonization of Canadian and U.S. lists of toxic substances. Canada's list prevents some U.S. products from being sold in Canada. The Canadian government is planning, under the SPP, to relax its requirements on pesticide residues on fruits and vegetables entering from the United States. Forty per cent of the pesticides Canada regulates have stricter limits than the United States. Thanks to the SPP, this may not be the case for much longer.

How Harper plans to deal with Canada's energy sources raises concerns as well. The government is eager to oblige to United States energy demands by facilitating the rapid expansion of Alberta oil sands production for export to the South. During the 2006 meeting, members of the SPP talked about cutting red tape for various planned pipelines that would take tar sands petroleum to the United States for processing.

This will cause Canadians to lose jobs as well as control over one of its most valuable resources. For example, U.S. multi-national ConocoPhilips, a partner in the SPP, is investing billions in upgrading refineries in the United States to process the petroleum.

The Communications Energy and Paperwork's Union has produced studies showing that 18,000 jobs will go south to the United States.

This brings into play moral concerns with the companies involved. Scandia National Laboratories and Exxon Mobil are two of the main players in the SPP. Part of Sandia National Laboratory's motto is to "maintain U.S, military and nuclear superiority" and ExxonMobile has an appalling record of human rights violations. For example, the villagers living around ExxonMobil's natural gas operations in Aceh, Indonesia are suing the company for "complicity in killings, torture and other severe human rights violations".

The SPP is waging a massive assault on democracy and will drastically affect Canada's ability to maneuver around many issues such as water, security and energy. There needs to be more debate.

Supporters of the SPP may argue that Canada is not powerful enough to stand up the United States, or that free trade under the SPP will benefit us all, but these arguments are unacceptable. Canada has stood up to the United States in the past. When America went to Vietnam, Canada refused to follow. When America bashed the idea of creating an International Criminal Court, Canada supported it. When America went to Iraq, Canada did not.

It is not in the scope of this article to go into detail about free trade but it is worth asking a few questions. How does shipping jobs to the United States benefit Canadians? And how does losing control over our water and relaxing our regulations on harmful chemicals benefit Canadians? We are at a crossroad. Is Canada going to be controlled by the interests of the people, or the SPP and elites who control it?

Learn from Buddhism

Karen Louise White

The University's Interfaith Chaplaincy is sponsoring a Dharma teaching by a Buddhist scholar with respected academic standing in Western educational institutions as well as in the traditional Buddhist monastic systems of India and Nepal.

Ngawang Jorden (called "Khenpo" in Nepal and India) earned a PhD in Buddhist Studies at Harvard University and teaches at the University of Chicago. He also teaches every summer at the International Buddhist Academy in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Jorden's teaching, titled The Basis, the Path, and the Result of Buddhist Practice, will be on Dec. 16 at 7 p.m. in the UVic Interfaith Chapel. Jorden has been an integral part of the International Buddhist Academy since it was founded six years ago by the great scholar and teacher Khenchen Appey Rinpoche, for the specific purpose of offering serious Western students an opportunity for in-depth study of texts by early Buddhist philosophical masters. This elite level of education was previously limited to those with backgrounds in Sanskrit, Tibetan, or Chinese, and within the relatively closed system of monastic colleges, such as Sakya College in India, where Jorden studied and later taught Buddhist philosophy.

Buddhism originated in India, and as it spread, it adapted to different cultural and philosophical climates throughout Asia. Texts by the early Indian Buddhist masters were written in Sanskrit, the literary language of the day, and were later translated into other languages, inspiring a wealth of commentary.

> You will recognize these Indian Buddhist masters as having a foundational place within your tradition.

Many of those "ancestral" Indian texts hold the essence of Buddhist teaching in its original form, free from elaboration or sectarian bias. These works continue to provide inspiration to Buddhist students throughout the world, enriching their study of the primary level of Buddhist scripture: the record of oral discourses of the Buddha. Whether you're aligned with a Japanese Zen school, the South East Asian Theravadin tradition, any of the four lineages of Tibetan Buddhism, or the East Asian "Pure Land" schools, you will recognize these Indian Buddhist masters as having a foundational place within your tradition.

For Buddhists, the whole context and significance of "receiving a Dharma teaching" is very different from the concept of passively "listening to a speech." Receiving teachings is part of an active process of Buddhist practice known as "hearing, contemplating and meditating."

Hearing teachings, for example, when accompanied by the motivation of wishing to learn in order to benefit others, already has the beginnings of both compassion and wisdom, and will lead to further wisdom through diligent questioning, analysis and reflection.

All are welcome to drop by, ask questions and get to know Buddhism better.

UVic biology students need ecology

Brandon Beatty

The move away from ecology courses in UVic's biology department (Botching biology, Nov. 29) is nothing new.

The trend in the biology department to embrace the modern biological sciences has been part of a strategic plan for roughly two decades. Prior to this shift, biology focused primarily on marine and other organismal science. More molecular, DNA-oriented courses were left to biochemistry.

In order to cultivate this strength, the right people had to be attracted to the department and the hiring began almost two decades ago. It was apparent that more faculty with interests in "modern" biology would fill a demand and bring UVic *closer to the cutting edge. Today,* courses with contributions from microbiology and biochemistry are popular because students find them exciting and recognize their relevance. Thanks to the foresight and strategic planning of faculty and administration years ago, UVic has achieved a respectable breadth of research and course offerings in the "modern" biological sciences. However, this trend is not without costs and it seems that as modern expands, ecological contracts.

Areas such as ecology remain important even if they do not generate millions of research dollars or spin off profitable companies. It truly is my passion, but I share it with a dwindling group.

For the many students who study whole-organism biology and ecology, their goal isn't to just study the natural world, but to interact and truly understand it. Deep within all of us is a severed link between true understanding and what might be called a soul. By studying whole organisms and ecology, some can traverse their egos, and human roles become a little more defined.

Maybe 20 years ago a strategic plan to establish and invigorate the modern biological sciences at UVic was what was needed. Today, ecology needs rescuing.

Some of the essential messages we learn in ecology courses are that habitat loss, over-consumption, pollution and global warming are resulting in the disappearance of what we call the natural world. How ironic that ecology courses which emphasize such truths are also disappearing. Perhaps a strategic plan for the next 20 years could focus on the rebuilding, not just the preservation, of ecology at UVic.

Cut spending on your friends

Marri Knadle

Only a few more shopping days left. You can't glance into a mall without seeing throngs of shoppers, their coats soaked with rain and their arms bundled with gifts as they move amongst the glitzy displays and decorations. Are their teeth bared in a rictus of shoppers' rage, or are they genuinely smiling with the joy of the season? Our secularized society has placed a dollar value on giving, and it's really a lose-lose situation. There's plenty that can and does go wrong in gift giving, from garish sweaters and undesired CDs, to the classic $10 spent on a friend who — surprise — spent $50 on you. Some simply deal with delivering a gift to a lukewarm response, or bear looking like a tightwad. Others take the practical approach and state their budget up front, demand a list of desirable items, or just opt for a catch-all gift certificate.

Joy to the world.

Homemade gifts such as baked goodies and knit items may be making a comeback among younger West Coasters, suggesting an attempt to swap monetary output with time output, an important option for budget-conscious students. The return of homemade gifts may also hint at a desire to avoid the commercialized aspect of the season. But your dozen delicious Nanaimo bars or your charming wool scarf still loses its effectiveness under the tree next to an IPod Touch from Uncle Moneybags.

This festive financial frustration isn't brand new, but it is modern. Proactive buyers lashed out in 1992 with Buy Nothing Day, an anti-consumerism event started in Vancouver. The event, publicized due to the efforts of Adbusters, aims to strike an axe blow to materialistic attitudes and mindless spending. It's no coincidence that it falls on Nov. 23, typically the first day of the Christmas shopping season and also one of the busiest shopping days of the year. Will delaying the shopping stampede make much of a difference in the long run?

Doubtful. A single day of buying nothing is a drop in the barrel. It seems we fight through crowds of fellow shoppers, drain our accounts and spend our time, all for diminishing emotional returns

The Dismal Science columnist Joel Waldfogel found through surveys he conducted that a dollar you spend on something for yourself creates 20 per cent more perceived satisfaction than a dollar you spend on a gift for someone else.

That means that when you buy for others, your gift is worth 20 per cent less, per buck, in their eyes. If you've spent $200 in the holiday season (not too difficult to do, if you allot only $10 to 20 people), you've effectively flushed $40 of that down the toilet. A nice sweater, two CDs, a glossy hardcover book, a sizable donation to a charity, a dinner with drinks out — thrown to the wind in the scramble to deliver.

Abandoning the motions of giving in a lump sum, and spoiling yourself and friends in little ways throughout the year may seem Grinchy and unorthodox, but its effectiveness might also surprise you.

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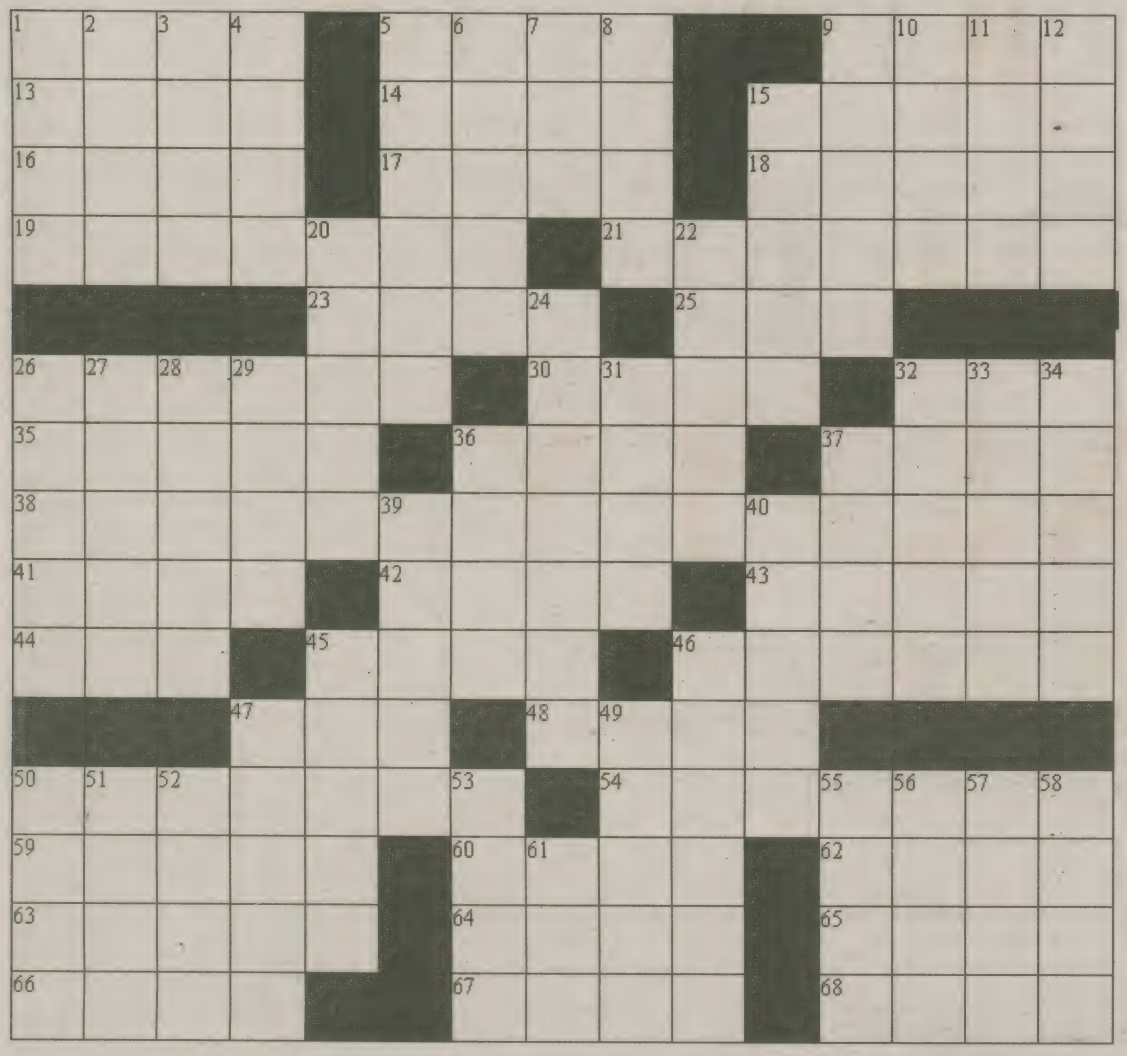

Across

1. Openly declare
5. Like Bert and Ernie
9. Criticize harshly
13. Cleave
14. Take to the streets
15. Rubberneck
16. Where the sailors are
17. Bones (Lt.)
18. Canvas shelters
19. Ontarian endangered species (2 wds.)
21. Ontarian species of concern (2 wds.)
23. Entreaty
25. Zone or table
26. Graduate project
30. "____ it", Jackson hit
32. Manicurist's locale
35. Plant excretion
36. AA members
37. Love action?
38. Ontarian threatened species (3 wds.)
41. Barley malts
42. Successful songs
43. The Lady, or the ____
44. Canadian trading org.
45. Place
46. Salmon side
47. Quarterback Marino
48. Where to get bresaola
50. Ontarian threatened species (2 wds.)
54. Ontarian species of concern
59. Eagle's nest
60. Id counterparts
62. Nucleus
63. Rotates
64. Memo
65. Fencer's sword
66. Arcade classic
67. Lemon drinks
68. Act

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For puzzle answers, visit our website.

Down

1. Muscat native
2. Popular card
3. Done
4. Put on the bottle
5. Lurks
6. Church feature
7. ____ Alamos
8. Strike with 65 across
9. Trigger or Traveller
10. Kristin Kreuk role
11. Crafts' partner
12. Hick hat
15. Daring display
26. What Andy Rooney does
22. Slightest
24. Gave up
26. Take out
27. Fixes, medically
28. English county
29. Plays musical chairs
31. Greek vowels
32. Fake
33. Flush game
34. Copycats
36. Irksome mood
37. Use scissors
39. Horned beast, for short
40. Spill red wine
45. Vaults
46. Shuts
47. Extremely anxious
49. Ham it up
50. Desperate breath
51. Take back: (abbr.)
52. DJ Davis
53. Lucy Lawless role
55. Performed well
56. Lariat
57. Native Manitobans
58. Give attention
61. The big guy

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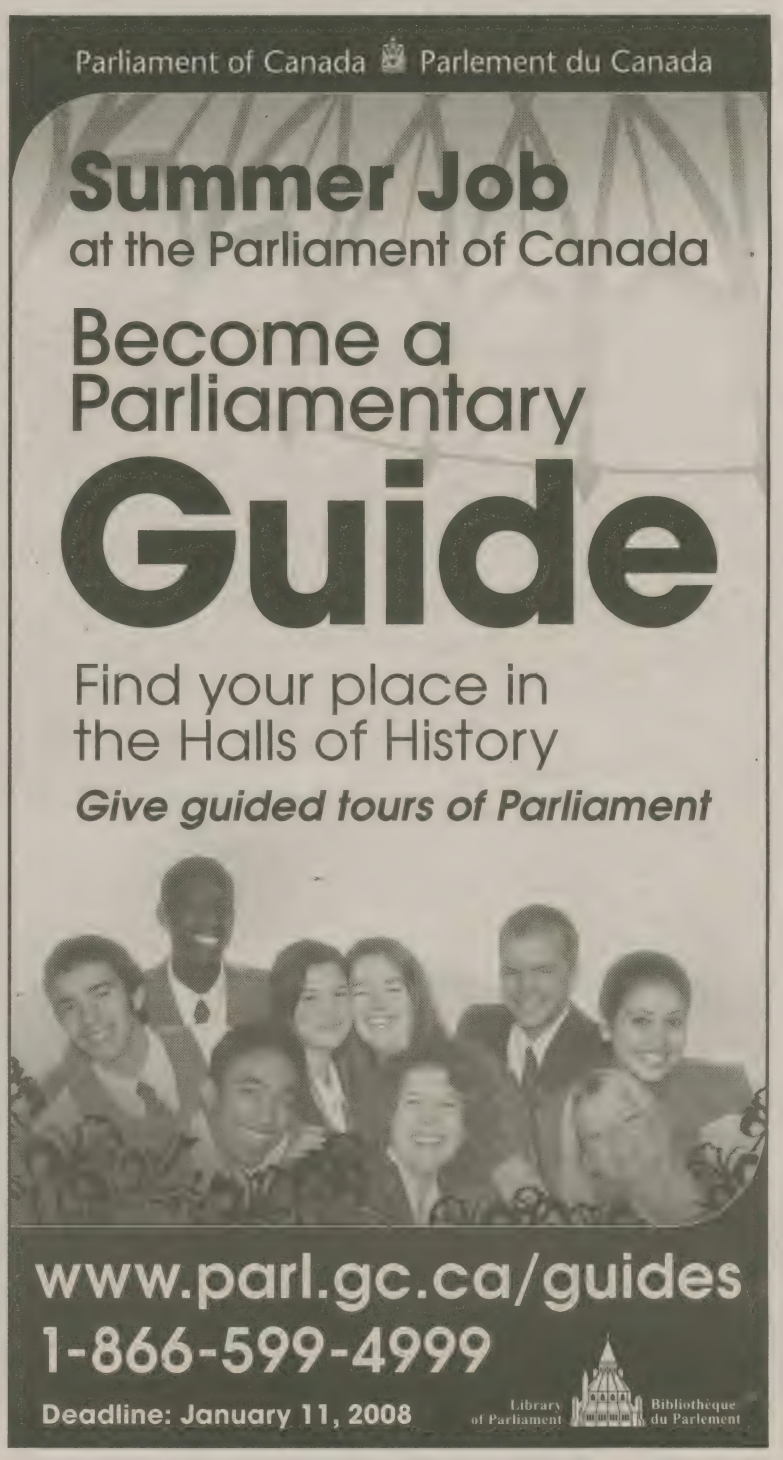


A COLD REALITY

The Martlet's staff photographer gains a new perspective working in Nunavut

Text and photos by Ahmed Mumeni

July 16

The fact that I was leaving the next day for Nunavut finally hit home last night. Despite my excitement for a new experience, I still felt anxious and very nervous. Was I ready for 42 straight days of hard labour?

My alarm woke me at 5 a.m., scolding me for not having packed my gear. At 5:30 a.m., I said goodbye to my family and left for the airport. My flight to the Arctic was in two hours.

I write this journal entry in Room 238 of the Siniktarvik Hotel in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut. The place is desolate, cold, and without any vegetation. Mosquitoes are attacking in full force nonetheless. The faces here look different, and all the signs are in Inuktitut.

The room, the phone calls and the food, is all paid for by someone I'll never meet in the accounting department of the company I now work for. I have yet to meet, or even speak with my supervisor; I am following instructions as they are revealed to me on a day-to-day basis through e-mail. My airplane ticket was just e-mailed to me last night. I don't know what time my flight to the base camp is tomorrow, or even where I'm being flown. I'm back at square one … travelling, alone, and in a very strange place, this one being the strangest I've ever been to.

July 17

I didn't sleep much last night.

The sun stayed over the horizon the entire time. It was one of the weirdest sensations, not being able to sleep despite being exhausted. At 2 a.m., children were still playing outside as ATVs sped past on the dusty gravel roads.

I was told the expediter would phone me to indicate when I would be picked up. I waited. I had breakfast, then a nap, then lunch, followed by another nap. By 3 p.m., I was still waiting. I went to the front desk and asked if anyone knew of a Kevin who was an expediter who was contracted by the company I worked for.

"Yeah, he works for Kenn Borek Air. It's the only company in town that does expediting — do you want me to call them?" the receptionist asked.

When I finally got a hold of the Kenn Borek Air office, Kevin was out of town and there was another expeditor taking over. His name was Beavan.

"We're still waiting for a Twin Otter that's going to your camp. There won't be a flight today," he said. "I'm not sure when the next flight is, but hang tight. When we get a flight out for you, I'll let you know."

I was in limbo in a foreign place.

July 18

I walked around Rankin Inlet today.

It didn't last long because I was ravaged by mosquitoes. They said

the mosquitoes would be bad, but I didn't know they would be this bad.

The town seemed spartan. The houses were portables, most likely shipped here on a barge. Evidence of harsh winters — old, rusted, broken Ski-Doo parts — lay rusting in the tundra. Empty pop cans littered the ground. Teenagers hung around the town's Northern Co-Op and called me a tourist as I passed.

A cold howling wind was ever present, a constant reminder of how empty the tundra was. It seemed to be reciprocated in the nature of the town's social problems. Empty cans of furniture stripper by the town's centerpiece, an Inukshuk, lay decaying in rust, evidence of chronic boredom amongst the young population.

Old traditions clashed with new ones as teenagers sported mainstream clothing — baggy jeans, flat-brimmed hats, and oversized hoodies.

An odd form of culture shock seems to have ensued.

July 19

I am bored.

There is not much to do except wait. I've been waiting for a few days now, and it's driving me insane.

I feel very isolated. I haven't spoken to many people and feel quite ill from lack of sleep and nutritious foods. Fresh foods come at a premium in Rankin Inlet because they have to be flown in.

Hard tap water led me on a search for bottled water. The hotel canteen had none. The Northern Co-op sold bottled water in bulk — at nearly $4 per litre. A few apples went for approximately $10. Everything was so expensive. How can people afford to live here?

I finally got a phone call from Beavan. He carried good news. I was to fly out to camp that afternoon.

July 24

The Arctic tundra is a world apart.

For the most part, it remains untouched, and for good reason. The landscape, much of which is frozen the majority of the year, is stark. Winters are long, unforgiving, and dark. The soil, frozen below the surface, makes it impossible for trees to grow. As temperatures rise during the summer, the top layer of permafrost melts, leaving behind bogs, marshes, lakes, and streams infested with hundreds of thousands of mosquitoes.

I am several hundreds of kilometres north of Rankin Inlet. If one were looking for an isolated, inhospitable, brutal, yet beautiful landscape to find solitude in, this would be it.

Aug. 4

I can barely write, but if I don't get my thoughts on paper now, they will never make it.

My fingers are frostbitten. So are my toes. My face is swollen and burnt, not from the sun, or the heat, but from the frigid Arctic winds I encountered on the job today.

After the helicopter dropped me and my field partner off in the tundra, a storm came and pounded us with cold wind, rain and hail. We were stranded with no hope of evacuation for a few hours due to the lack of visibility for the helicopter. In such dire times, you hunker down, test your nerves, and wait. Such is the harsh reality of exploration work for commodity resources that fuel the world economy. I knew I was going to be working during my birthday, but I didn't expect to be stuck in the midst of a raging Arctic storm.

Despite all of this, I love this job. It may be physically tiring, but who gets to navigate a helicopter everyday to get to work? There's something about the landscape that is completely epic. I would come back here in a heartbeat.

Dec. 3

Back at university, I'm looking forward to the winter holidays.

The past few months have been hectic, a stark contrast to the relatively peaceful days in the Arctic. I still crave being on the road. In class, I am restless.

I see it all around me. People are wound up — constant work leaves little time to enjoy the finer things in life. I feel as though I am persistently shackled to a computer like a chain-smoking monkey on a typewriter as I churn out paper after paper, lab after lab. Is this what I signed up for?

For me, each moment spent learning from a textbook is a moment less spent out in the real world. At school, I would never have the opportunity to run into a herd of muscox, or have a lone Arctic wolf keep me company while on a hike in the tundra. Knowing that, I yearn to be out there.

It is while I am on the road when I learn most about myself. I learn about my abilities, my thresholds, and skills I never knew I had. It is while I'm on the road I feel boundless. I feel free.

Cracking the procrastination habit

Kim Magi

"My name is Tyler, and I have a procrastination problem," a UVic student wrote in his blog. "Seriously, though," he continued, "I started a 2,000 word academic essay ... at 4:30 this morning. It's due at 9:30."

A couple weeks later, Tyler (who, like the other students interviewed here, didn't want his last name or discipline in press) talks about his bad habit.

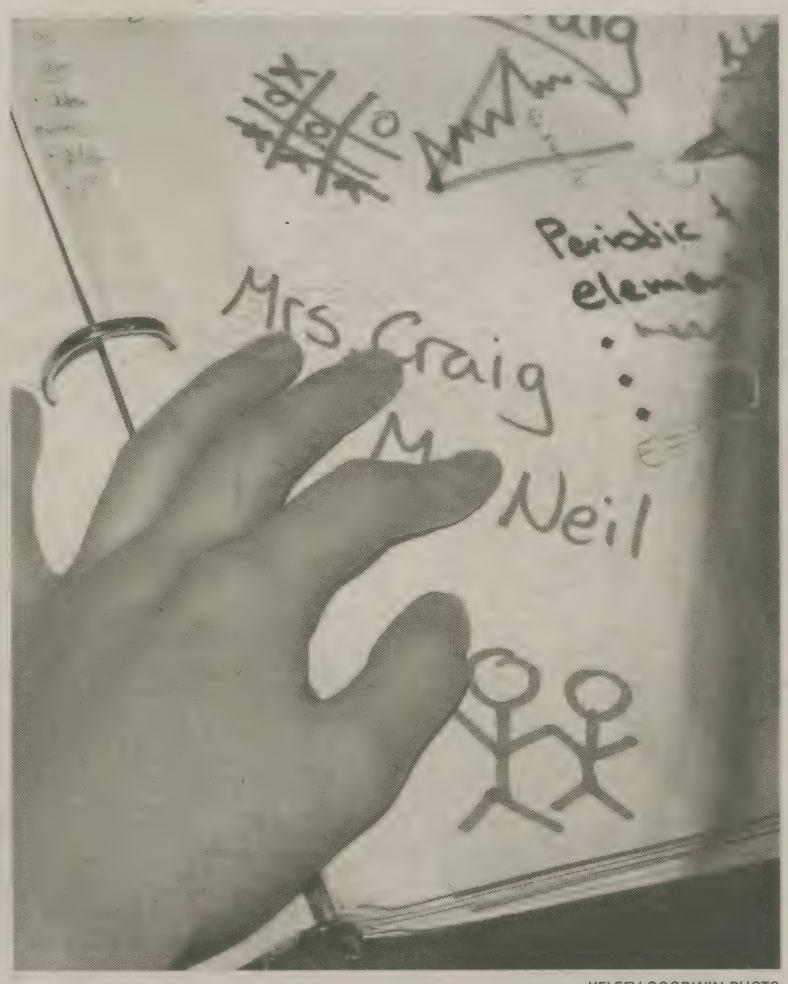
"I've never really been completely on top of things," said Tyler. "It's actually been getting worse and worse."

Most students procrastinate. When people visit UVic Counselling Services, they're given a form to fill out to state the reason for their visit. "Many, many people circle procrastination," said counsellor June Saracuse. "There are an awful lot of students in university who don't know why they're here."

The reason? "There's more fun things to be doing," said Lisa, a master's student.

Time management is one of the biggest reasons people procrastinate. And it doesn't matter how big the project. Leanne, a master's student, wrote 90 per cent of her thesis in two weeks while working full-time (she estimates she wrote about 10 pages per night).

"I work well with deadlines, but they have to be real deadlines," said Leanne, noting that she can't write essays or work on projects when the deadlines are so far off. "I just really hate writing. I'll do anything to avoid it."



KELSEY GOODWIN PHOTO

For many people, procrastination started back in high school.

"When it feels like I still have time, I think I might as well relax," said Tyler, who added he usually starts assignments no earlier than midnight the night before they're due.

Lisa said she works best at night. "Procrastination is a way to set a limit on how much time you spend on something," she said.

But some are trying to break the habit. Saracuse said when students come to her with time management issues, one of the tactics she'll have them try is keeping a study log for one week, in which the student will mark the date, time, place, what they're studying and why they stopped. She said that usually by the end of the week, students will realize it's not that they don't have the time to study, but there are other reasons compromising their study time, such as being too tired. She suggests that students go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, even on weekends, in order to achieve higher productivity. Students have no problem memorizing when they're sleep deprived, she said, but have trouble comprehending anything else.

Distractions are a significant factor in procrastination. If students don't have regular things to distract them, they'll find anything to keep them from writing a paper. There are many Facebook groups attesting to this, such as "Nothing Gets My Room Cleaner Than A Paper Due Tomorrow," which boasts more than 14,000 members.

"MSN and Facebook contribute to their procrastination," said Saracuse.

Tyler agreed, saying these two programs are his biggest distractions. He said it's because it's "actually close to work while not being work," since he already has his computer on.

Leanne has even disconnected her computer from the Internet, although she said she ends up playing Solitaire instead.

"I wouldn't say just turn it off," said Saracuse. "Set yourself a specific study goal. For example, 'I will read pages one to 10 in English, and I will do that between 5 and 6:30.' " Once you've accomplished your study goal, she said, reward yourself with 20 minutes of your favourite distraction.

Leanne jokes that her grandparents always know when she has a paper due because that's when they get lengthy letters from her.

Leaving assignments to the morning of has proven a problem for students on more than one occasion. "I stopped proofreading years ago," said Lisa. She's handed in papers one or two days late thinking, "Oh, what's two per cent [off] a day?"

"[Unless you're a really good writer], it's hard to get away without proofreading," said Saracuse.

Many students admit their procrastination habits began in high school. Tyler said this happened to him when he realized most of his courses were too easy, and he could get away with starting his papers the night before.

Lisa agreed. "Projects always started and finished the night before [they were due]," she said.

Some students, such as Leanne, findthey worked better in high school. "My dad proofread everything for me," she said, so she would have to finish her assignments on time.

Saracuse said picking a "study buddy" can help, and it doesn't matter if they're working on the same subject. She said having that other person sitting near you can calm your nerves and help you get right down to studying.

ASK MISS MARTLET

Beat exam stress: retrain your responses

Danielle Pope

Dear Miss Martlet:

Why is it that whenever I go into an exam my brain freezes?

- SuperStressed

Dear Super:

There's actually a simple answer: that same anxiety that controls your body's response to panic (the fight-or-flight mechanism) also produces a rush of adrenaline that helps you feel focused and alert — the fight response. But too much anxiety can lead to panic, which actually blocks your thoughts in preparation for the flight reaction.

JENNIFER ZHOU GRAPHIC

In other words, that *I can't do this* feeling in an exam stems from the same trigger that causes you to flee from a lunging grizzly.

But here's the trick: you know better than your body that a few sheets of paper aren't going to leap up and bite you — at least not physically.

The key is talking yourself back into that fight stage and retraining your body to stay there.

The best way to avoid exam stress is what you do pre-exam, ideally eating right and exercising. Don't have time to whip up a gourmet meal? Grab a banana and a glass of milk. These foods actually contain morphine-like substances that calm you down.

Avoid sugary foods that lift you up then send you crashing, but throw a few Hershey's Kisses into your backpack — chocolate can boost your morale with its theobromine, another calming agent.

If a 30-minute jog is out of the question, try a brisk five-minute walk around your house. And while walking to class counts as exercise, anticipating the exam makes this walk less than relaxing.

Once you're in the exam, try these tips from Oxford Brooks University's test taking guide for students:

• Straighten your back, and breathe in deep. Close your eyes, and slowly blow out.

• Look over the whole exam first (surprises cause more anxiety), then attack the questions you know first.

• If you get ideas for other questions, jot them down on a separate paper (if allowed) so you aren't trying to remember them.

If anxiety is getting the better of you, OBU suggests the following techniques:

• Stop your thoughts. Don't let negativity dig in its fingernails. Halt negative thoughts by mentally telling yourself *stop* or envisioning a stop sign.

• Create a mild pain. Lightly press your fingernails into your palm or twang your wrist with a rubber band to block anxiety.

• Distract yourself. Look out of the window for a quick weather check, or count the number of tables in each row to sidetrack stress. If things are getting unbearable, envision yourself boarding down powdered slopes or remember how funny your cat looks when she chases her tail. The key here is not to daydream, but to "reset" your emotions.

A few other pointers: visualize success. Your brain naturally anticipates responses, so give it one to work towards. Try Aromatherapy. Peeling an orange is relaxing and citrus smells will keep you more alert than caffeine.

Win or lose, remind yourself that it will all be over soon. While that might not secure your A+ in the exam, it will relax some of that brain-freeze tension.

Got a question? Let Miss Martlet do the investigating. Send queries to missmartlet@martlet.ca.

UVic shows its Chris — er holiday cheer

Kailey Willetts

It's that time of year again. Lights are up downtown, Santas are making their way to malls, and Seasons Greetings and Happy Holidays signs are popping up everywhere.

Call it what you will, but it's the Christmas season that's being celebrated in shops, city centres and schools.

The concept of Christmas in North America has been sparking controversy for years. Canada is a multicultural country with many religions, and many people feel that public Christmas celebrations exclude those of other faiths.

UVic has been a secular university since 1961, and therefore doesn't promote Christianity.

However, as a multicultural, multi-faith community, individuals are welcome to decorate their dorm rooms and offices as they choose. There are Christmas trees in the Cadboro Commons cafeteria and Seasons Greetings signs at the school's entrances.

Christmas trees have been a source of controversy nation-wide for years, with some cities calling them "Holiday" trees.

However, Christmas has turned into more of a cultural phenomenon than a religious holiday, much like Halloween. Many people who celebrate Christmas these days are atheists or agnostics.

"It's what we do in North America," said Henri Lock, the United Church chaplain at UVic. "It's part of our culture, part of who we are. What is it that gives offence when someone is celebrating their identity?"

Some people on campus say the Christmas controversy is a lot of fuss about nothing, and that the decorations causing this controversy aren't part of the original Christian holiday at all.

"People are associating a lot of non-religious things with a religious holiday," said Linda Sproule-Jones, UVic's equity director.

The equity and human rights department at UVic promotes education on the different religious holidays, and acknowledges the holy days that take place each month. Many religions observe a holiday or holy day in the winter; there is Eid, Hanukkah, Bodhi Day, Kwanzaa, Winter Solstice and Diwali. Many of these holidays are festivals of light like Christmas.

Indeed, during the darkest months of the year, who doesn't need a little lift? Shelia Flood, UVic's Baha'i chaplain, feels the same way.

"I would rather see us going that way and having more celebrations rather than wiping them out," she said.

Non-Christians are enjoying Christmas decorations around campus.

"I'm all for flora indoors," said Jewish student Max Sussman, when asked how he felt about the Christmas trees in the cafeteria.

Maybe UVic students are more open-minded than the rest of the country, or maybe they've just smoked too much weed to care. Or, perhaps, everyone can enjoy a little bit of extra cheer during the stressful exam period.

AHMED MUMENI PHOTO

Festive bows liven up the windows in UVic's Continueing Studies Building.

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FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 4, 2007

1. HOLY FUCK *
   LP (Young Turks/XL)
2. VARIOUS
   I'm Not There Soundtrack (Columbia)
3. ORGONE
   The Killion Floor (Ubiquity)
4. SUNSET RUBDOWN *
   Random Spirit Lover (Jagjaguwar)
5. COBBLESTONE JAZZ †
   23 Seconds (!K7)
6. BARMITZVAH BROTHERS *
   Let's Express Our Motives (Weewerk)
7. BLOCKHEAD
   Uncle Tony's Coloring Book (Ninja Tune)
8. BONNIE "PRINCE" BILLY
   Ask Forgiveness (Drag City)
9. BISON *
   Earthbound (Forest)
10. BUCK 65 *
    Situation (Warner)

* Canadian artist † local artist

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Canadian band keeps multicultural style

PROVIDED PHOTO

Bedouin Soundclash doesn't conform to the stoner-barbecue-in-the-summer reggae stereotype.

Bedouin Soundclash may not be worried about fame and fortune, but their newest album, *Street Gospels*, is redefining reggae

Who: Bedouin Soundclash
What: Tour with The St. Alvia Cartel
Where: Element Nightclub
When: Dec. 12
How much: $27

Alex Grant

Bedouin Soundclash's sophomore album, *Sounding a Mosaic*, received such acclaim that it would have caused weaker bands to call it quits rather than dealing with the enormous expectations of creating another album.

But Bedouin Soundclash's latest album, *Street Gospels*, not only managed to overcome the dreaded follow-up slump many bands suffer from — it proved their music has evolved.

"I'd have to say I'm most proud of this album," lead singer and guitarist Jay Malinowski said. "It's more personal for the band."

Street Gospels revisits all the upbeat, sing-along melodies of *Sounding a Mosaic*, but introduces some beautiful slower songs. A soft highlight, "12:59 Lullaby," was featured on Grey's Anatomy. "Bells of 59," a relaxed tropical track, is another enjoyable tune.

Though their music is continuously labeled as reggae or dub, Malinowski has long protested to the band being defined in any way.

"We're not reggae," Malinowski said. "We're just a mash of a whole lot of things."

Their music is not a representation of their influences but of the three band members themselves. Each brings their own musical, spiritual and artistic perspectives to the creation of their music.

"I truly believe there isn't anyone else doing what we're doing," Malinowski said. "I think that it has something to do with a unique [aspect] about Canada. It's the multiculturalism. It's like k-os ... he's doing his own thing, but at the same time it's Canadian."

Given that reggae was such a huge inspiration for Malinowski, he said he feels the need to dissuade people from the stoner-barbeque-in-the-summer image generally associated with it.

"There's a caricature of what it is that people use," he said. "There's no real knowledge about its history. It's real music, like rock or Motown. Most people's knowledge comes from one album, like a Bob Marley or Sublime album, when it's so much more than that."

The beginnings of the band are a testament to the way they have always approached music. They met in 2001 at Queen's University in Kingston, Ont. Malinowski and bassist Eon Sinclair were neighbours when they discovered their shared passion for music.

"The cultural exchange [Sinclair and I] had was so interesting," Malinowski said.

They fed off of each other and constantly introduced each other to different music. Drummer Pat Pengelly, who had a jazz background, joined soon afterwards. By their graduation, they were already enjoying the success of *Sounding a Mosaic*.

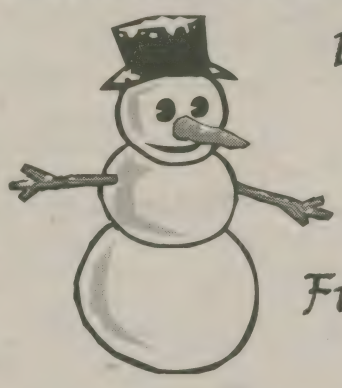
Given the degree of fame and success they have already attained at such a young age, do they see themselves reaching even higher levels of fame?

"I hope not," Malinowski said. "I don't ever really want to be famous. I'm uncomfortable being recognized ... living normally is far better. We're comfortable where we are."

But Malinowski is set on getting their next album out as quickly as possible.

"The last [album] took so long. I feel like we overcame a huge milestone with our last record [since] there was so much expectation," Malinowski said. "We kept stalling it ... it was such a huge effort, and ended up taking us two years. But it's been worth it ... it's been good to see the reaction from people."

Having overcome the obstacle of their follow-up album, Bedouin Soundclash has proven itself deserving of the international acclaim they have received and secured a position as one of Canada's leading musical talents.



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2. Donations must be made in person at Campus Security Services.
3. One reduction per ticket, no limit on ticket number(s).
4. Donations and reductions will only be made from 8:00 AM Dec 3—4:30 PM Dec 21st. No exceptions

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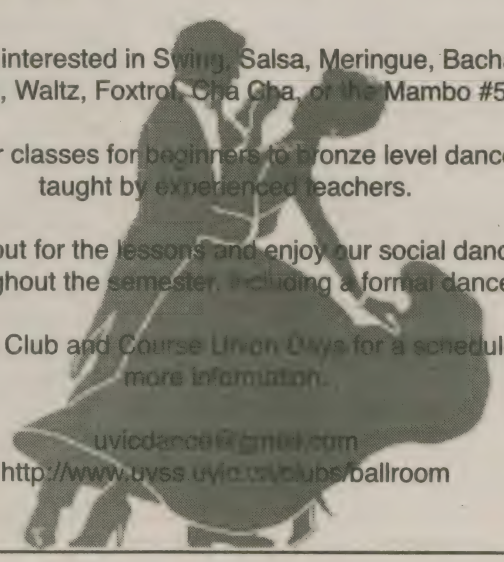

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Wheel entertainment

VeloVixens celebrate a year of bicycles and theatre

What: VeloVixens first anniversary
When: Sat., Dec. 8 @ 8 p.m.
Where: Recyclistas Bicycle Collective
How Much: Free

Jessy Ana Rucker

JOSH SZCZEPANOWSKI PHOTO

Cordelia Horsburgh sits on a mini-bike in front of her dance mates.

Bikes aren't just for riding. At least not for Victoria's VeloVixens, whose dance routines and skits give bicycles a shining role.

On stage, the eight-woman group fights evil with their two-wheeled vehicles of justice, with some acrobatics and fire spinning thrown in. VeloVixens use their passion for creativity and sustainable living to perform shows that encourage people to ride bikes. They make this point using tricycles, BMXs and tall bikes.

"We're confronting issues and telling a story. I think it's important to our routines to try to compliment it with an issue based or community-based theme," said Annie Banks, 22, a facilitator for youth programs.

In one skit about the oil industry, a large black cloth represented an oil slick that overpowered children playing jump rope, until rebels on bikes showed up to restore the fun.

"Velo" is a French word for bicycles, which aren't just transportation for these women. They're a lifestyle.

"We know [cycling is] good for the environment, it's good for our bodies and it's totally fun. We just like how it feels," said group member Cordelia Horsburgh. "We're just a group who came together because we love to dance, we love bikes and we have fun in our living rooms practising routines. And we want to get people excited about riding."

Most days Horsburgh, 35, takes her son to school on a tandem bicycle and then rides to work. She is an assistant with a non-profit fundraising organization. In her spare time she makes jewelry from bicycle parts for art auctions.

The group met at cyclist events in Victoria, such as fundraisers for The Bike Lab Society, a group that does workshops on building and fixing bicycles.

The VeloVixens agree their motivation for bike riding comes from the independent ability to do something sustainable and affordable. They add that they love the carefree feeling of cruising on a bike, riding with friends or working on something artistic for a bike event.

"It's the only thing I've done that I've had the most spiritual highs off of," said VeloVixen Triane Tambay, 24, a student and bicycle mechanic.

After she saw The Sprockettes dance troupe perform last year at the PedalPalooza festival for bicycling in Portland, Ore., Tambay got friends together to start a group.

"Our first performance was just booty shaking in short shorts — you know, to promote bikes," said Horsburgh with a laugh.

Since then, VeloVixens has developed a storytelling focus with a circus-like flair. Their costumes vary from lacy to raggedy, often with stripes, studs and leather.

VeloVixen Allie Donnelly explained that the characters in their shows are diverse personalities without the restraint of typical gender roles. They perform without dialogue to whatever music inspires them, from gypsy to heavy metal. Sometimes bikes are their instruments as they bang them with tools.

"We hope that what we're trying to communicate comes through our acting and our costumes," said Donnelly, 27, an elementary school teacher.

Horsburgh said most of the women in the group had no previous dance or theatrical experience.

"Someone will step forward with an idea and each time it's really different," she said.

The VeloVixens often perform at bicycle celebration events, either at Recyclistas Bicycle Collective, house parties or out-of-town festivals. They want to see the group at local festivals and events that promote the art scene or environmental projects.

"Anyone can come together and take some initiative if you want to change anything about the world and the way we live," Horsburgh said.

The VeloVixens don't charge admission to their shows, though a venue may have an entry fee. For show props and travel costs, they sell clothing printed with the group's name.

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Time to talk sustainable. Period.

Sam VanSchie

It's her rag, her aunt flow, her red letter day. Most teenage girls learn that menstruation must be hidden with euphemisms and discreetly managed with sanitary products. But with age comes wisdom, and some women are questioning that convention.

Three women who founded Victoria's Sex Ed Exchange in May, for example, are eager to bring up the topic and tell anybody who will listen about their love of reusable menstrual products.

"I've created a bubble, I think," said Sarah Mundy, 28, creator of MyVag.net. "Anybody who doesn't want to hear about my vagina stopped being friends with me long ago."

The basis for the Sex Ed Exchange is people's desire to talk about taboo topics and swap experiential knowledge at monthly by-donation workshops led by experts on topics ranging from sex toys to sexually transmitted infections. Their November focus was modern menstruation, and the three founders were the experts.

When they menstruate, Mundy and her co-founders Tracy Coulter, 30, owner of Kiss and Tell sex shop and Robin Tosczak, 27, co-ordinator for UVic's Anti-Violence Project, all use the DivaCup — a one ounce, clear silicon cup worn internally that can be washed and re-used for several years. The FDA-approved cup was unveiled in 2003 by a mother-daughter duo in Kitchener, Ont.

SAM VANSCHIE PHOTO

Tracy Coulter (centre) holds her DivaCup with Sarah Mundy (behind) and Robin Tosczak.

and costs $40.

This is a radical shift from mainstream forms of feminine protection. The average Canadian tampon user spends thousands of dollars on over 17,000 tampons over 35 years of menstruation. That cost and quantity nearly doubles for pad users. And because these synthetic products land in sewers or landfills after a single use and don't easily break down, it's both frugal and environmentally sound to start talking about alternatives.

"If you hang out with people who use alternative stuff, there starts to be a lot of peer pressure because those products are so clearly superior," said Mundy. "You start to feel like a loser if you're like, 'I like OB tampons.' "

Tosczak also credited society's blooming interest in female sexual health for the popularity of the DivaCup. Tampons carry the risk of toxic shock syndrome when worn too long and Coulter is fast to point out several other reasons why she rejects them, from the bleach and other chemicals she doesn't want in her body to the fact that they suck up all of her natural juices.

"It's like wearing a polyester shirt in your vagina," said Coulter, not one to mince words. "And it looks like a dead rat when you pull it out."

Coulter used pads until roughly a year ago, when she decided to try the menstrual cup she'd been seeing everywhere.

"[The DivaCup] was the first reusable product that didn't seem like an alternative," said Tosczak. "It seems like they're marketing to Oprah fans."

Indeed, the DivaCup comes in a pink and purple package, with a pink "diva" button to wear promoting your sustainable purchase.

Besides most natural foods stores, it's sold at London Drugs and Pharmasave, and has been advertised in American feminist magazines such as Bust and Bitch.

"Practically everybody I know uses them," said Coulter.

Before the DivaCup, there were several reusable products available if you knew where to look.

The Keeper is the DivaCup's American hippy grandmother. Made from natural gum rubber, the brown cup has the same design as the DivaCup, minus some holes and ridges. Released in the late '80s, the Keeper has long been a sustainable option for women without latex allergies. It lasts twice as long as the DivaCup and costs about the same. But it's hard to find in Canada.

Going back further, sea sponge tampons were popular in Europe in the '70s and are still available today. Harvested from the Mediterranean Sea, the sponges can be washed and reused for up to six months. They look like mini-Loofas and sell for about $10 each.

For external protection, women have made reusable cloth pads since long before disposable products were invented at the end of the 19th century. Cloth pads made a resurgence in the '70s, with companies such as LunaPads in Vancouver coming out with modern designs involving Velcro or snap closures and "cute" material. They sell for about $15 each. Many women still make their own cloth pads from terry cloth and flannel, using a disposable pad with wings as a template. Cloth pads usually last a year or two.

Despite many options, many women are still reluctant to try reusable products.

"Some people just aren't really down with menstrual blood yet," said Mundy. "It freaks them out."

During their five-day period, women usually discharge about three ounces of blood. The first two days are the heaviest. Mundy recommends trying reusable products (especially internal ones) on a heavier day for the extra lubrication and to get a sense of its capacity and leakage.

"People imagine it's going to be a bigger deal than it is," she said, pointing out that tampon marketers perpetuate the stigma of menstruation as a hygienic catastrophe. She suspects most women would be surprised to see how little blood actually ends up in the cup.

But Coulter added that some women aren't comfortable touching their genitals.

"Tampons give you an applicator and a sterile procedure for working 'down there.' It's ridiculous," she said. "[Some women] worry about a little blood on their hands, like it won't come off with a little soap and water."

Coulter said this is something women will need to get over if they want to use the DivaCup. To insert it, women must pinch the cup, fold it in half, then push it inside themselves with two fingers and allow it to open. But once it's in, most women won't think about it until the end of the day when they remove it for cleaning.

"It makes menstruating much easier," Coulter said.

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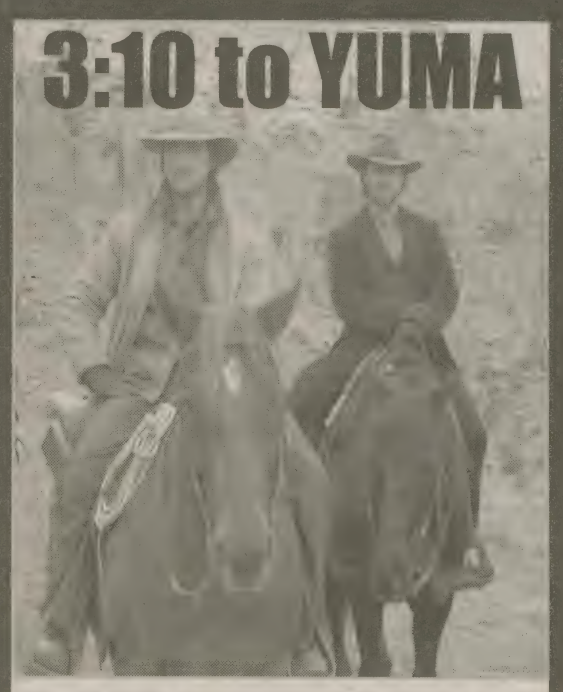

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Idol rocks the 'stache

Spencer Anderson

On the final night of UVic Idol, 12 undergraduate students were greeted like rock stars.

They were the contestants who, since September, have been singing at Felicita's to earn their place on the big stage. The final round ended at 1:30 a.m. Saturday morning, with Matt Murray taking home the title and $1,000 grand prize. Lauren Clinton and Erin Thompkins took second and third place, winning a free round-trip flight to anywhere in Western Canada, and a $100 SUB card respectively.

Each performer sang twice, once in each half of the show. At the end of the show, the audience voted for their favourites. Forty per cent of the vote went to the judges, with the remaining 60 per cent of the decision left to audience members.

The show began with performers absorbing the energy of the crowd of roughly 450. Audience members often danced to the country, pop, rock and show tunes being performed. The general positive atmosphere of the venue even seemed to affect the judges, who offered overwhelmingly positive reviews of each performance.

Although each performer brought their own style and energy, Murray was the front-runner from the start. Murray, a cross between Anthony Kiedis and Freddy Mercury, casually sauntered over to the microphone and delivered his first song, Tracy Chapman's *Give Me One Reason,* in a cool, assured, reedy tenor.

Murray's supporters went berserk when his first notes came through the speakers, and didn't let up until the song ended. All the judges, particularly Andre Shersty, complimented Murray on his unconventional choice of first song and noted his relaxed, smooth delivery.

Murray had some tough competition from his fellow finalists. Thompkins' strong rendition of the Aretha Franklin anthem *Natural Woman* resonated well with the crowd, as did Clinton's musky, soulful take on The Temptations' *Ain't Too Proud To Beg* and brassy choice of *Mustang Sally* for her second song.

There was a healthy variety of songs performed. Mike Nussbacher's cheeky take on Queen's *Fat Bottomed Girls* was miles away from Kara Taylor's sultry, slow performance of Peggy Lee's *Fever*. In the end however, Murray's confident, laid-back personality and singing style won over the room. Near the end of his second song, Audioslave's *Like a Stone,* Murray found himself surrounded by a throng of supporters, and he took advantage by crowd surfing at the end of the tune.

After the competition, standing on stage with his competitors and sipping champagne, Murray triumphantly accepted the first place prize from last year's winner and this year's MC, Chelsea Rose.

Murray, who transferred from Simon Fraser and is now in his second year at UVic working toward a bachelor of science in geography, said music has always been "a big part" of his life.

While he joked that he'll use the prize money for more recreational purposes, Murray said he and a friend are writing songs and doing open mic nights. Murray plays guitar and listens to the blues.

"I'm pretty impressed by how many great voices I heard tonight," he said. "This whole experience and process has been pretty good."

SPENCER ANDERSON PHOTO

UVic Idol Matt Murray sang the blues to win the $1,000 grand prize.

CD REVIEWS

Discs to keep your holidays spinning

Ire Works
Dillinger Escape Plan
RELAPSE

Ire Works is the Dillinger Escape Plan's first album since all but one of their members left. Gil Sharone was given the difficult task of replacing iconic drummer Chris Pennie. But a couple tracks in, it's obvious that Sharone is the perfect fit.

Now that you're comfortable with the new lineup, "Black Bubblegum" bursts your bubble with pop hooks splattered across the track — all too fitting with the name. By now, you should be ready for anything, as the album soon reveals itself to be the biggest and most daring step in the Dillinger Escape Plan's history. Ire Works is filled with samples, glitch, brass, synth, drum machines and all the elements that purists despised on Miss Machine. This album, however, manages to be even harder and more tech than previous releases.

Ire Works is the Dillinger Escape Plan's best album. Just don't let it bother you if half the album gets major club spins.

- Alain Champagne

D-Sides
Gorillaz
EMI

The Gorillaz's last CD, *Demon Days,* was my staple kitchen dance music for several months after its 2005 release. When baking trays came out, the CD went in, until it mysteriously disappeared as overplayed disks so often do.

If it weren't for that, I probably wouldn't have picked up their recent offering *D-Sides,* a two-disk collection with outtakes and remixes of *Demon Days*. The pack is sure to be a cult classic with the band's many loyal followers.

But most will miss this CD because they already own the former release and don't think they need three more remixes (including a 12-minute rendition of "Dare") and 13 tracks that didn't make first cut. That's their loss — this disk is awesome.

Gorillaz could have released this CD on its own. But that would have been too conventional. They're in the Guinness Book as the world's most successful virtual band, the cartoons who played at the 2006 Grammies and the instigators of the "reject false icons" graffiti turning up globally.

The *D-Sides* opening track, "68 State," sounds like classic video game music and can be interpreted as them asking the listener not to take them too seriously. The songs that follow are equally playful, showing a more experimental side of the band. And the remixes, well, they'll probably mysteriously disappear soon.

- Sam VanSchie

Colors
Between the Buried and Me
VICTORY RECORDS

Colors is Between the Buried and Me's fifth studio album in five years. This might lead you to expect an album that sounds rushed and barely evolved from previous releases, but this could just be the best album of its genre.

Defining genre, however, is the challenge. Despite its strong roots in metal, Colors spans a broad spectrum — and that doesn't just mean metal with hints of hardcore and prog. "Ants of the Sky," for example, boasts a sampled drunken western bar fight set to banjos, while "Prequel to the Sequel" features accordion music paired with frottoir and faux-French accents.

The genre experimentation in *Colors* will make you forget that the Grey Album was ever Black and White. What is more surprising is that these parts don't sound out of place; the album plays seamlessly through as a 64-minute epic. If you've got the palette, *Colors* is a masterpiece.

- Alain Champagne

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Former Tiger roars for UVic

Gemma Karstens-Smith

AHMED MUMENI FILE PHOTO

Ryan McKay takes on her defender during a game against Simon Fraser.

Ryan McKay has played for two Canadian Interuniversity Sports (CIS) women's basketball teams in two different conferences on opposite ends of the country. The one thing that remains constant wherever she goes is that McKay is a force to be reckoned with on the court.

After completing a degree in kinesiology at Dalhousie University in Halifax and playing four seasons as a forward with the Dalhousie Tigers, McKay is now pursuing an MBA degree at UVic and leading the Vikes as a guard.

The change in teams meant a change from the Atlantic University Sport (AUS) conference to the ultra-competitive Pacific Division of the Canada West Conference. The Pacific Division is home to defending CIS champions Simon Fraser Clan and the UBC Thunderbirds. Simon Fraser is currently the top-ranked team in the nation, with the T-Birds coming in a close second.

"They're two very different styles of play," said McKay of the change in competition between the East and West Coasts.

Moving cities, however, wasn't as drastic.

"I was in Halifax, which is a lot like Victoria," she said. "But the weather here is a lot better."

McKay's stats this season indicate she's adjusting to the Pacific Division just fine. In her first 15 games with the Vikes, she has scored a team-leading average of 21.8 points per game, including 11 games where she scored 20-plus points. McKay's scoring has contributed to a 6-6 record for the Vikes in CIS play this season, where they've faced some of the best teams in the league.

"I love playing with her," said third-year UVic forward Kayla Dykstra. "She can do everything: penetrate, shoot. She's a huge, huge help to our team this year."

Being such a versatile player has been causing headaches for McKay's opponents.

"We tried some different things to contain her, but nothing worked," said University College of Fraser Valley coach Al Trusherer. The Vikes won a pair of games against his Cascades on Nov. 23 and 24. In the first game, McKay put up 27 points, followed by a 21 point performance the next night.

She may be having a career-high season, but McKay doesn't feel pressured to continue putting huge numbers on the board every game.

"Everyone on the team can score when they need to," said McKay of her fellow Vikes.

Being a star is nothing new to the Fredericton, N.B. native who's been playing basketball since she was in Grade 6. In McKay's first season at Dalhousie in 2002-03, she won the AUS Rookie of the Year award and the conference coaches voted her onto the AUS all-star team in both the 2003-04 and 2005-06 seasons. During the 2005-06 season McKay was also named a CIS Academic All-Canadian, given to student athletes who achieve a grade point average equivalent or better than 80 per cent.

Those high marks are part of what brought her to UVic.

"I came because of the business program," said McKay, who isn't sure yet what she wants to do with her MBA. "And there was a spot on the team so I thought it would be a good place to play my last year."

CIS rules state that athletes can only compete for five seasons, which means that McKay will be done after this season. She doesn't have any future plans for basketball. For now, she's just enjoying this year and hoping that the season ends on a strong note.

"I have a couple years of school left, so we'll see what happens after that," McKay said.

Moving across the country to play for a new team may sound like a challenge, but it's been made easier by the fact that McKay is far from being the only new member of this year's team. On a team of 13 this season, seven are first-time Vikes with two transfers from B.C. colleges and four rookies fresh out of high school.

"They're all great girls," said McKay. "We get along really well."

That camaraderie has shown on the hardwood. The Vikes have been communicating on the court and playing selfless ball, staying patient when in possession and looking to teammates for the open shot.

UVic will need that kind of teamwork when league play resumes in January. The Vikes are fighting for a top spot in the Pacific Division playoffs in hopes of getting to the CIS National Championships which will take place from March 7 to 9 at the University of Saskatchewan.

Vikes hand UBC first home loss in two years

Jordan Chittley
THE UBYSSEY

VANCOUVER — The UVic men's basketball team split a series against UBC, winning by 16 points on Nov. 30 and losing by three in a nail-biter on Dec. 1.

On Nov. 30, the Vikes topped the T-Birds 92-76, handing UBC their first regular season home loss in more than two years, and their second loss of the season.

While the game began pretty evenly, the second quarter proved to be particularly testing, as the Vikes outscored the T-Birds 21-12 and opened up a 12-point lead at the half. The Vikes never looked back once they began to open up the lead in the second quarter and held Canada West's top offence to just 76 points.

UVic was led by a stellar performance from first-year guard Ryan MacKinnon who put up 20 points, including four three-pointers, and dished out seven assists.

"They scored 20 points above their average ... and that is just unacceptable in our gym," said UBC coach Kevin Hanson.

But the T-Birds were able to turn it around the next night thanks to fourth-year guard Chirs Dyck who took control down the home stretch. The T-Birds walked away with a 64-61 win to split the series and keep them atop the Pacific Division.

The T-Birds came into the Dec. 1 game looking like they had no intention of losing again as they opened up a 10-6 lead halfway through the first quarter. The Vikes took their first lead of the night halfway through the second quarter when Tyler Hass nailed a three from just outside the arch. But the lead was short-lived as the T-Birds quickly tied it up. UBC went on a 7-0 run, including a buzzer beater from Brent Malish to take a 31-21 lead into the locker room.

Dyck got the T-Birds going early in the third with a big dunk. But the Vikes began to narrow the gap by moving the ball on offence and drawing fouls going to the net. This was part of their 12-4 run before UBC called a timeout to try and stop UVic's momentum.

The Vikes kept rolling and finally tied it up with two minutes left in the third when Mike Hull hit both his foul shots. But the T-Birds wouldn't let up and held their narrow lead for the rest of the quarter.

Hass blocked a Dyck three-point attempt early in the fourth quarter, stuffing it in Dyck's hands before stealing the ball and trotting coast-to-coast for the basket and the foul. The successful free throw put the Vikes up by one with just over six minutes left.

But UBC regained control, grabbing a three-point win.

Brandon Dunlop was UVic's top scorer with 15 points. Hass was second with 13 points.

League play is over for UVic until Jan. 4, when they'll face Trinity Western University in Langley.

- with files from Gemma Karstens-Smith

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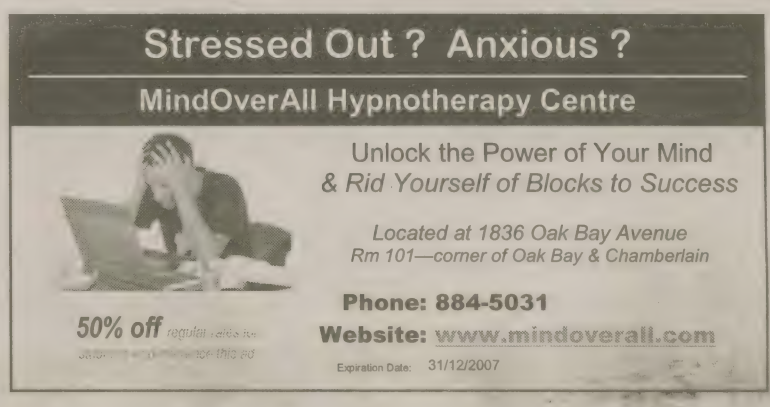
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James Bay wins another Barnard Cup

Andrew Smith

ANDREW SMITH PHOTO

UVic's Pat Kearney breaks away from the James Bay defence during the Barnard Cup championship game on Dec. 1. James Bay won 31-20.

A young Vikes squad tore through the dazed James Bay defence in the opening minutes of the Barnard Cup on Dec. 1, but the effort wasn't enough to walk away with the championship. James Bay took the game 31-20.

UVic's only two losses of the fall season were to James Bay, including a 39-10 blowout on Nov. 17. James Bay held a 7-1 record going into the Barnard Cup final.

UVic was at a disadvantage, with head coach Doug Tate and several first string players in the United Arab Emirates, playing in the International Rugby Board Sevens World Series.

The game's opening attack in saw Vike Scott Manning easily convert a penalty. Minutes later, a cheeky chip left James Bay watching as Gordie Sawyers ran over for a try. With a successful conversion the underdog UVic side was up 10-0.

James Bay were stunned again minutes later as their weak tackling allowed first-year Vike Chris Young to slice through their defence.

It wasn't until 23 minutes into the game that James Bay responded with a try by Nolan Miles. The James Bay players appeared to calm down and managed to string their passes together. Their size was crucial as the team edged their way further into the Vikes zone. After a series of rucks, the Bays side pushed through for their second try.

James Bay's Dan Harlow and fullback Mike Collins would each weave through the Vikes defensive line to score tries. James Bay scored 24 unanswered points.

"We couldn't' maintain the pressure for the entire game," said UVic's Pat Kearney.

It was Chris Young, a call-up from UVic's reserve team the Norsemen, who was able to answer down the wing. His quick pace saw him outrun four Bays players to go over for a try.

James Bay played it safe for the remaining minutes as much of the ball was kept in the pack while they rucked and mauled their way over the try line for a score of 31-20.

The match was over when a younger, deflated Vikes team gave up a penalty in the dying minutes.

The Vikes looked strong in the forwards but the transition between plays from the back line was obviously missing. However, the Norsemen stepped up to fill the gaps.

"Some of the Norsemen were our best players today," said Kearney.

Rick Farrally, filling in for Tate, said the Norseman call-ups performed well and held their own in an intense atmosphere, which isn't easy for players who have never been in a final at that level.

He noted that UVic gave a strong effort against a larger and more experienced James Bay side.

"For an amateur side [James Bay is] pretty professional," said Farrally.

This year was the 90th Barnard Cup, and James Bay's 43rd times.

T-Birds sweep Vikes in series

Jordan Chittley
THE UBYSSEY

VANCOUVER — The UVic women's basketball team suffered a couple of tough losses to the second best team in the country on Nov. 30 and Dec. 1 when they played on the road against the UBC Thunderbirds.

On Nov. 30, UBC beat the Vikes 71-52 by stopping them for long periods of time, including six minutes in a row in the second quarter.

Erica McGuinness stood out for the T-Birds on both nights. She had 22 points, including several down the stretch, to hold off the UVic's late charge and win 66-59.

After some back and forth scoring, UBC opened up the lead to 10 points by the end of the first quarter.

Similar to the previous night, the T-Birds did not allow the Vikes to penetrate during the second quarter. Due to numerous turnovers, the Vikes took almost four minutes to score their first basket of the quarter. UBC, on the other hand, moved the ball well and created inside scoring chances.

Michelle Lee and her Vikes teammates were often forced to take the outside shot, but couldn't get anything to drop. The T-Birds were right there to pick up the rebounds. UBC went into the looker room with a 15-point lead.

The Vikes came out in the third quarter with a lot more energy and quickly made it on to the board. The increased energy led to the Vikes closing the gap to within 10 points, but then McGuinness came out hitting with back-to-back three-pointers to quickly open the gap again.

In the fourth, the Vikes capitalized on turnovers to close the gap to six with less than five minutes remaining. The Vikes began to step up their defensive efforts, not letting any T-Bird get an open shot anywhere near the hoop until UBC's Zara Hutley snapped the brief scoring drought with a hard-fought layup.

"[The Vikes] are a solid team ... they take a lot of pride in how they compete," said T-Birds coach Deb Huband. "They are known to play solid defence and never say die."

The teams went back and forth down the stretch, but the Vikes were unable to seal the gap.

"I think its great to have an opportunity to play our long-time rivals," said Huband. "On any given night you need to be able to withstand another team making a charge and I think [UBC] did that in the fourth quarter."

Ryan McKay led the Vikes in scoring throughout the series, putting up 21 points on Nov. 30 and another 20 on Dec. 1.

The losses drop the Vikes to 6-6 this season. The team will take a break until they play in the Dino's Christmas Tournament at the University of Calgary on Dec. 28, 29 and 30. UVic will resume league play when they visit Trinity Western University on Jan. 4 and 5 to take on the Spartans.

- with files from Gemma Karstens-Smith

VIKES SCOREBOARD

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Nov. 30 Vikes 92 UBC 76
Dec. 1 UBC 64 Vikes 61

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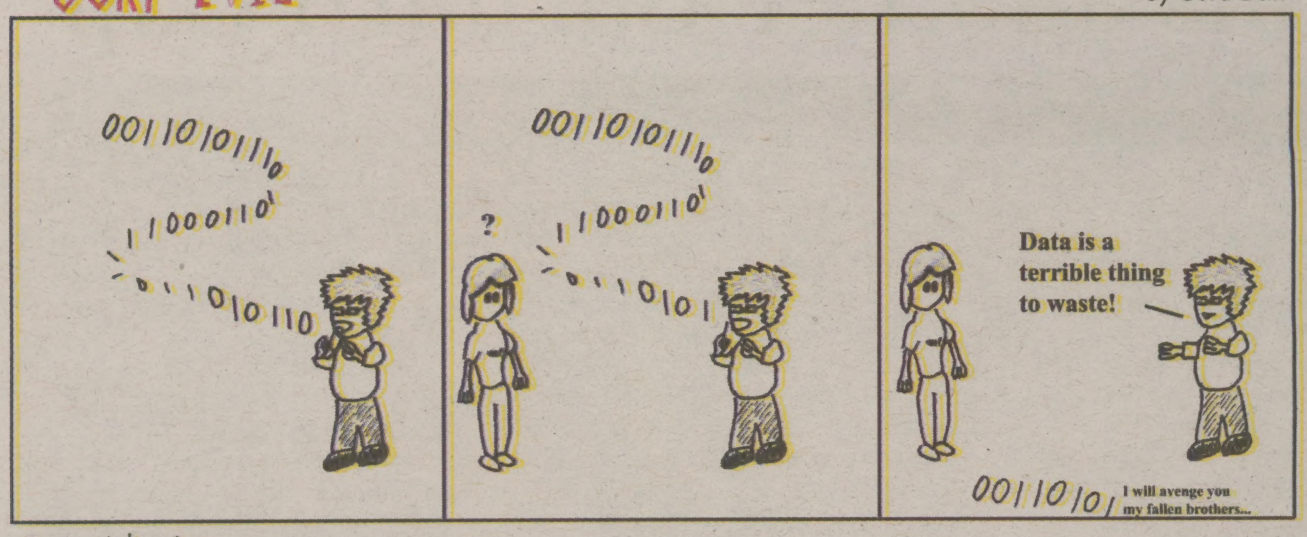

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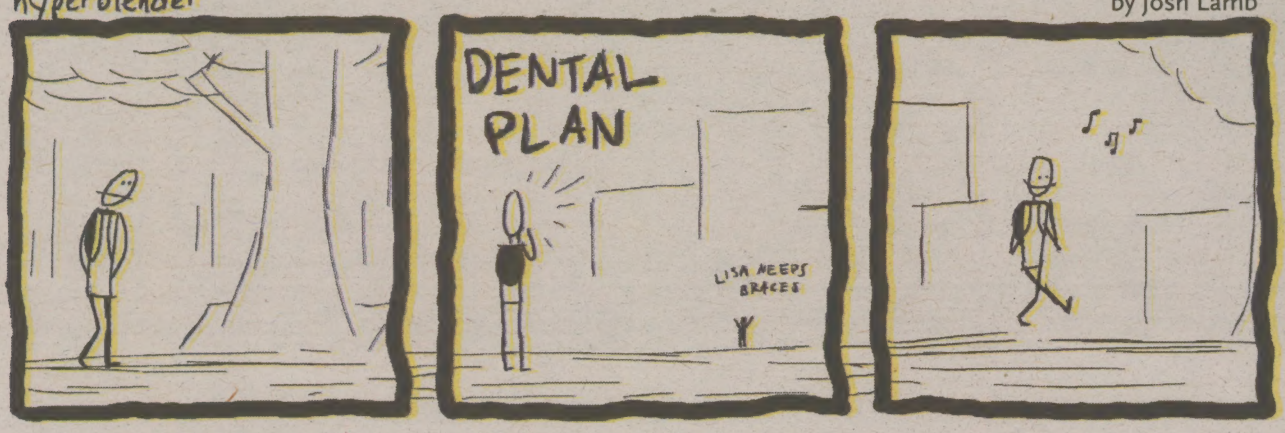

CITIZENS PROFOUND

by Joe Darius

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THE ADVENTURES OF BASKY AND PORBEAGLE

BASKING SHARK ENTHUSIAST

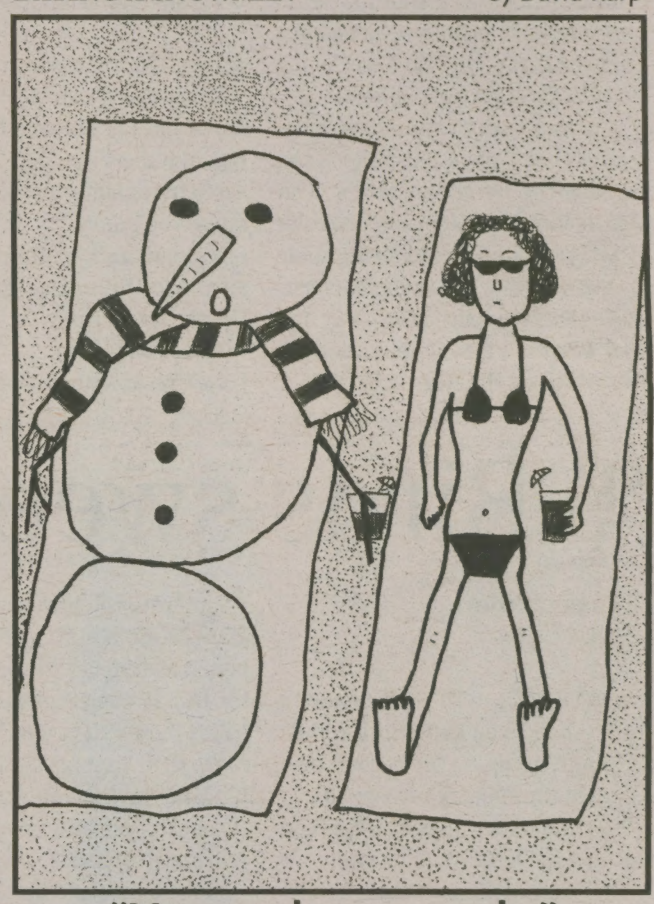
Fun Fact: The Isle of Man operates a basking shark watch website! More info at manxbaskingsharkwatch.com. Hooray for people who care.

NOOSEHEAD

©2007 BY SAM LOGAN.
READ THEM ALL AT: WWW.SAMANDFUZZY.COM
IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU TWO GOT HERE! LOOK WHAT THIS LITTLE BASTARD DID TO US!
I HAD TO DO SOMETHING TO END ALL THIS HOSTILITY BETWEEN US, EARL!
AND IF YEARS OF WATCHING WACKY TV SITCOMS HAVE TAUGHT ME ANYTHING, IT'S THAT BEING HAND-CUFFED TOGETHER ALWAYS TEACHES PEOPLE TO GET ALONG.
SELF-INFLICTED BRAIN DAMAGE COULDN'T MAKE ME GET ALONG WITH YOU. NOW HOLD STILL!
UH... THAT AXE IS JUST FOR CUTTING THE CHAIN, RIGHT?
SURE IT IS.
DON'T DO IT! WE NEED TO USE HAND-CUFFS TO STRENGTHEN OUR RELATIONSHIP!
DON'T FEEL BAD, FUZZ. MY EX-GIRLFRIENDS NEVER BOUGHT THAT LINE, EITHER.

DATING A SNOWMAN

by David Karp



"You make me melt."

Three Men in a Boat v.2

Jerked off, played some Guitar Hero
AJ Batchelder, Sam Bagley, Skott Wong
'Sup?
hey.
Meh, had a logic exam, didn't go about it very logically... You do anything?
not much, jerked off, played some guitar hero, made a sandwich.
Are you drowning Skott in the sink?
Yep.

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ITALY BIKE TOURS. Self guided tour from $695. Guided tours from $1,550. For details 665-4030 or gordonlitster@shaw.ca

JOBS & OPPORTUNITIES

FEMALE STUDENT: $100 per night to help mom with a disabled child, just sleeping overnight in the guest room. Call Leah. 382-2433.

Western Canada Wilderness Committee is seeking environmentally aware, outgoing people to join our canvass team. Flexible hours, fresh air and fun! Call Mike, 388-9292, 2-4 pm, Mon-Fri.

Earn Money While At School! Campus Representative Wanted Local VoIP Company (877) 639-2835 Email: scampbell@newatel.com

ALPINE PRO needs outdoors-like people to staff our store. Active individuals for a fun work environment needed: send resumes to minda@heywood.ca or visit us on Johnson St. Market Square

VOLUNTEER / GET INVOLVED

Victoria Riding for the Disabled Association provides a therapeutic riding program for children and adults with disabilities. If you enjoy horses and people, this would appeal to you. No experience is necessary; we provide training. However, volunteers must be 16 years of age or older. Classes are held Tuesday – Thursday mornings and afternoons. Info: 658-6272 or vrda@shaw.ca

ARE YOU A MORNING PERSON who loves to help people? NEED Crisis & Information Line has changed its requirements to match your requirements! Training starts February 16th and continues on Tuesday evenings. Apply Online at www.needcrisis.bc.ca

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UPCOMING EVENTS

THURSDAY, DEC. 6

Greater Victoria Water Watch Coalition Meeting
7 pm
2994 Douglas St, (BCGEU Bldg)
Join us as we discuss ideas generated at the recent Water Conference and explore effective ways to make a difference in the coming year. Enjoy refreshments to celebrate the holiday season. Next meeting Thurs Jan 3, 2008
Info: gvwwc@shaw.ca

SATURDAY, DEC. 8

Rally and information about the Bear Mountain Interchange
3 pm
Outside Langford City Hall, Goldstream ave.
There is a MARCH being planned to RALLY local support for the treesit, and INFORM the public around the planned development formerly known as "the Bear Mountain Interchange," currently known as Spenser Road Interchange. There will be (hopefully) free food, live entertainment, speakers and workshop. Then a lantern walk (if possible.) Come prepared to show support and have fun.
Info: 472-4388

To submit an event, please email promo@martlet.ca by Monday

TUESDAY, DEC. 11

Lecture – Nutrition: Plan-it organic
12 - 1 pm
UVic, David Strong Bldg, C118
This presentation explodes the myths and facts about organic food products related to health and wellness. Free.
Info: 721-8375

Winter Birds of Victoria
7:30 pm
UVic, David Strong C-103.
Join Ann Nightingale as she shows us the beautiful birds that call Victoria their home during the winter. Everyone welcome.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 12

OrganicAthlete Victoria meeting
6:30 pm
Discuss plant-based nutrition for athletes! Side room at Green Cuisine, come at 6pm if you're getting food, meeting starts at 6:30! RSVP.
Info / RSVP: dave@earthfuture.com

Results Canada education and action meeting
7 - 9 pm
1246 Fairfield Rd. Community Room at Cardiff Place
You are invited to a RESULTS Canada Education & Action Meeting. Discover the difference you can make towards ending the worst aspects of poverty on our planet. Topic: Bill C-293. It is time for more effective aid.
Info: Marilyn at 598-6326 or Anita at 652-0681. www.resultscanada.ca

FRIDAY, DEC. 14

Film: Jane Austin Book club
2:30 - 4:20 pm
7:00 - 8:50 pm
9:10 - 11:00 pm
Info: www.cinecenta.com

ONGOING:

Where Art is Born: Artists in their studios
UVic, Maltwood gallery
10 am - 4 pm, Mon - Fri
Robert Amos has been the art writer for the Victoria Times Colonist newspaper since 1986. Inspired by the artists he has met over the years, he has photographed them in their studios. These include: Robert Bateman, E.J. Hughes and Emily Carr's attic. Each of the 33 studio portraits of southern Vancouver Island artists will be enlarged almost life size, and represented by original artwork, mostly drawn from the university's collection. This exhibit runs from November 22, 2007 to March 31, 2008 in the Maltwood Art Museum and Gallery. Open Monday through Friday from 10am to 4pm and one hour before selected events in the University Centre Auditorium.

Happy
Holidays !

EARN $$
CONSIGN YOUR TEXT AT
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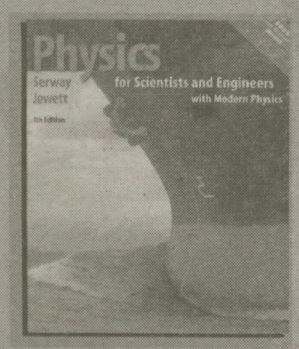

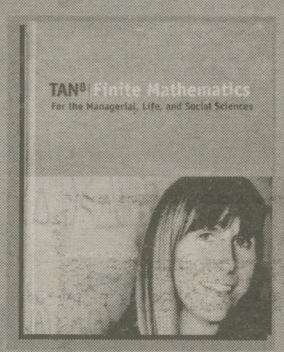

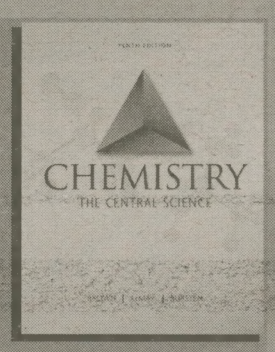

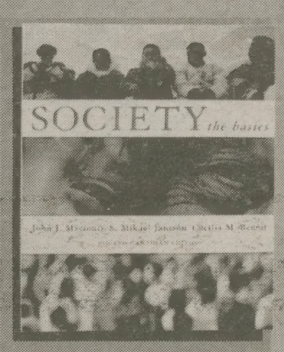

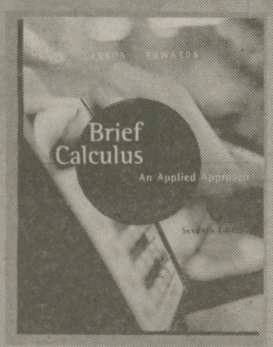

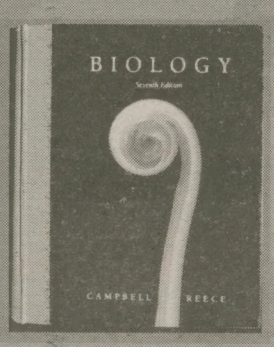

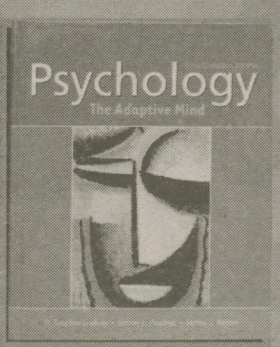

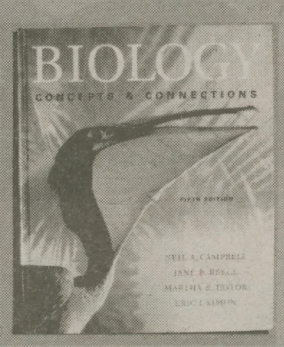

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